English and social worlds in contemporary Algeria

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Abstract

There has been increased media, corporate and academic interest about English "replacing" French in the Maghreb. Between dismantling language hierarchies harking back to colonialism and embracing globalisation, language replacement is being talked about as a solution to economic and social woes, but also as a proxy for Standard Arabic and a threat to multilingualism. My research focuses on making sense of what this "language shift" is, in the sense of examining what discourses and practices are being relocalised to English (following Pennycook, 2010), which changes are noticed and which are erased, what meaning(s) are being given to these changes, and how these processes intersect with existing social imaginings and power hierarchies.

I conducted eleven months of field work between November 2015 and December 2017, combining an ethnographic approach with document and semiotic landscape analyses. English-speaking spaces in Algiers were my main sites of study, complemented by shorter research stays in the West, South and South-East of the country. I challenge the notion of the "spread" of English (e.g. Crystal, 2003; Kachru, 1992) by foregrounding participants' multi-layered and multi-level explanatory frameworks in my examination of how English is being talked about, who learns and uses English, and where the language is visible in the semiotic landscape. Grounded in concepts of translanguaging and unequal Englishes, my research shows how these processes of relocalisation reproduced and transformed conceptions of identities, coloniality, social mobility, self-development, authenticity and the Other. By deconstructing the "conflict" explanatory framework, commonly applied to African and Middle Eastern case studies (e.g. Benrabah, 2013; Suleiman, 2011), I provide an alternative lens through which to understand the apparent contradictions between narratives of conflict and the realities of blurred identity boundaries and performative paradoxes.

Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award.

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Whose words? Young teachers of English and translanguaging, *TLANG2: Languaging in Times of Change*, University of Stirling, August 2019

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English as an 'anti-imperial' option: postcolonial languages in Algeria, *Humanities & Social Sciences Research Conference*, University of Portsmouth, May 2016

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Introduction

"Imprisoned in one language"?

In May 2016, an Algerian blogger exclaimed: 'Rebrab's first tweet is in English' (see figure 1). The surprise at the fact that the Algerian billionaire businessman should introduce himself to the social media platform in English echoed recent articles in the print and online media reporting on the prospects of English taking over French in the Maghreb, and of English pouring oil on the fire of the "language wars" of the region (BBC News, 2016; Lefèvre, 2015; Rose, 2016; The Economist, 2017). These impressions were fuelled by a flurry of anecdotal evidence coalescing to portray the largest French-speaking country outside of France as steadily replacing the ex-colonial language with the "international language", drawing historical, political and social conclusions from language choices. For instance, then Secretary General of the Rassemblement National Démocratique party (Democratic National Rally - RND) [1], Ahmed Ouyahia launched the new Facebook page of his party with a video message in Arabic, Tamazight, French and English, with the latter language making the newspaper headlines (Actualité Algérie 2017a). In 2018, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research's homepage for PhD students included a smiling student in graduating garb (marking her as being based at an English-speaking institution) pointing to the word "doctorate" on a board, with two more phrases in English below (Travel / Get a job) (see Figure 2). The previous year, another article reported on the 'nouvelle tendance qui consiste à remplacer le français par l'anglais sur les frontons des institutions de la République'[2], calling French 'un butin de guerre'[3], evoking the war of liberation and blaming 'islamo-baâthistes' for trying to 'emprisonner [les Algériens] dans une seule langue'[4] (Actualité Algérie 2017b). The article emphasised French as a spoil of war, a trophy gained despite the French colonisers who had no intentions of opening education beyond a narrow elite, and conversely defined English solely as a cover to promote (Arabic) monolingualism. Claims that championing a different language (English) is equivalent to imprisoning Algerians in one language highlight how the presence of the language in

[1] The RND was created in 1997 by allies of former President Lamine Zéroual, and remains closely affiliated to the Front de Libération Nationale (National Liberation Front - FLN), the ruling party since independence.

[2] new tendency which consists in replacing French by English on national institutions' pediments (all translations are my own, unless otherwise stated)

[3] 'a war bounty'; this particular phrase, from author and playwright Kateb Yacine, is often used to describe the re-appropration of the former colonial language

[4] 'emprison [Algerians] in one language'

Figure 1: An Algerian commentator expresses his surprise on Twitter (May 2016)

Figure 2: The homepage of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (September 2018)

the country can be understood through the lens of a predominant "French versus Arabic" conflict, with English serving as proxy to the latter. English is on buildings, in speeches, online and in government's messages, and the presence of these particular words is not considered neutral.

While French is still widely used in business, administration, higher education and cultural production, and as a marker of social class, media commentaries (followed by foreign organisations and academics) have suggested that a major language shift was under way, and 'English is now a national priority for the Algerian Government which has turned to the UK to realise its ambitious agenda' (British Council 2014). Between dismantling language hierarchies harking back to colonialism and embracing globalisation, language replacement was being talked about as a solution to economic and social woes, but also as an "imprisonment" and a threat to multilingualism. My research focuses on making sense of what this "language shift" is, in the sense of examining what discourses and practices are being relocalised to English (following Pennycook, 2010), which changes are noticed and which are erased, and what meaning(s) are being given to these changes. It also considers which conceptual

frameworks are useful in making sense of local practices and discourses and how they appropriate, re-shape and insert themselves within global narratives about language (as an object) and languaging. The latter can be defined as 'the simultaneous process of continuous becoming of ourselves and of our language practices as we interact and make meaning in the world' (García and Li, 2014, p. 8).

My study uses ethnographic data and a decolonial approach based on concepts of translanguaging and unequal Englishes to examine what jointly researching discourses and practices can tell us about "English" and social worlds in settings where another European language was the colonial language. It aims to understand the interplay between language and social worlds in contemporary Algeria by interrogating:

- the prevalent discourses about the language;
- who learns and uses English and what they do with it;
- how English is visible in the semiotic landscape.

Answers to the three questions above underpin the analysis of discourses and practices around English in Algeria, how they interact and the conditions in which they are integrated into existing social worlds. Discourses and practices around English do not exist in a vacuum but rather are read, reproduced, appropriated and/or challenged by individuals with existing and differing frameworks of perception of the world, socio-economic status, language ideologies and individual and group identities. Understanding English and social worlds therefore requires understanding how it is talked about and used, who is doing the talking and using and which actors or phenomena are erased by these discourses and practices.

Language wars, triumphant English and narratives of (de)colonisation

English is regarded as a "global language" due to its "spread" worldwide and its use as an international lingua franca, with ever-increasing numbers of learners across the globe (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 1997; Schneider, 2011). In addition, in policy circles and in the media, it comes to be portrayed as synonymous to or at least facilitating the transition to democracy, human and economic development, peace and security, and technological innovation (Karmani, 2005; Pennycook, 1994; Seargeant & Erling, 2011). Its "spread" across the globe is thus interpreted as an "obvious" response to objective facts, and a logical personal and national strategy (Park & Wee, 2012). There has been much research into the forms and functions of English in former British colonies (see for instance Kachru et al., 2006), as well as increasing attention being devoted to other contexts, such as studies into English as a Lingua Franca (see for instance J. Jenkins et al., 2017). Nonetheless, there is little understanding of how this process of "taking up" English is happening in countries where another European language was the dominant colonial language. Beyond celebratory accounts or accusations of imperialism and lan-

guage replacement (Durand, 2001; Phillipson, 2010, 2017), questions of who learns and uses English outside its traditional sphere of influence, how the language is talked about by different social groups, and whether it disrupts or maintains existing hierarchies and language ideologies (and how) remain under-investigated (Kamwangamalu, 2010, p. 10).

Discourses about language replacement never occur in a vacuum, and cannot be separated from their wider socio-political context or the language ideologies which underpin them. Understanding the significance of statements about language, from how they will be read (such as the Ministry of Higher Education's homepage) or how they are used to make political points (as in the case of the article reporting on buildings) requires investigating how global discourses about language are reproduced and appropriated within local contexts. Language ideologies, or the deeply ingrained beliefs regarding the worth and function of languages as well as how society should be organised, who belongs, and who is "other", structure practices and discourses about language (Schieffelin et al., 1998). As Bulot (2007, pp. 15–18) notes, the social, symbolic and communicative functions of language are closely entangled, including in academic production of discourses about practices. The promotion of language learning as a way of improving one's life chances (Park & Wee, 2012; Seargeant, 2009; Warriner, 2016) coexists alongside essentialist descriptions of languages as equivalent to ways of viewing the world, where changing language means changing one's soul (Hayane, 1989, p. 165).

Algeria presents a particular useful case study to examine discourses of liberation and oppression through language in a setting where English was not the colonial language, and where the former colonial language still plays an important role in the activities of the state, and those of the (urban) middle to upper classes. The conquest of Algerian territory by the French started in 1830, and led to the annexation of the three northern départements (over 80% of the population) as French territory in 1848, with the Sahara remaining under French military rule until 1957. The extensive land appropriation programmes, dismantling of existing education systems and knowledge networks, forced migrations and the encouragement of European settlements profoundly disrupted existing social, political, economic and linguistic conditions (Benmayouf, 2008; F. Colonna, 1975; Kane, 2016; McDougall, 2017b). Processes of classification used as part of colonial and settler rule, including the "standardisation" of patronyms, attempts to promote the study of "vernacular Arabic" to discourage the use of "literary Arabic", with literacy rates decreasing to less than 10% of the population, and the creation of myths of the "good Berber" and the "bad Arab" (F. Colonna, 1975; McDougall, 2006; Temlali, 2015; Turin, 1971), shaped how language became a part of the independence struggle (see subsection 1.4.1). After independence, French remained the language of the administration and of the most prestigious strands of the education system despite Arabisation policies. Although it does not have an official status, it is considered the "first foreign language" of the country, with the vast majority of Algerians having some communicative competence (to a greater or lesser degree) in the language. This greater or lesser degree is related to social capital, with French acting as a symbol of higher status and access to resources (such as jobs) as well as a mechanism of elite closure (Benmayouf, 2009; K. Taleb Ibrahimi, 1995, 1997). With "French" used to index modernity and access to knowledge, denoting democratic and secular values, as well as colonisation and neo-colonialism, there is a need to understand how the

"spread of English" in Algeria is understood, how it transforms local narratives of social privilege and belonging, and what practices are relocalised by whom and under what circumstances.

In a context where questions about languages often elicit well-worn responses acting as ideological markers (cf. subsection 1.4.2), a key part of this study was examining the correspondence, dissonance and interactions between discourses and practices. Ethnographic fieldwork, and especially the opportunity to 'hang out' (Geertz, 1998) in English-speaking spaces was therefore crucial in obtaining data and making sense of it, enabling a co-construction of knowledge through participant observation and repeated presentation of my preliminary data to participants (Bulot & Blanchet, 2013, pp. 27–40). Developing a framework to explain the interactions between discourses and practices around English and their interaction with existing social structures and political forces required bringing my participants' explanatory frameworks in conversation with the ones I was using, rather than attempting to superimpose a pseudo-expert "truth" above their voices (Bonilla, 2015). Ethnographic methods complement existing research which had focused on policies, political pronouncements or other languages only. While the initial research focus was on English-speaking spaces in Algiers, similar spaces in three other cities were also investigated, in order to bring other voices within the discussion and develop more refined conceptual frameworks.

My thesis therefore provides an empirical case study crossing existing research on critical sociolinguistics undertaken in two different languages, and challenges the neat dichotomy being drawn between "French" and "English". The research therefore contributes to the literature on English in the world by refining our understanding of how practices and discourses are relocalised into English outside its traditional sphere of influence, especially in contexts where another European colonial language already fulfills many of the social and symbolic functions ascribed to "English" as a global language. By looking beyond forms and functions into the meaning-making processes integrating languaging within social worlds, it responds to repeated calls from existing research to provide more empirical and conceptual insights into mechanisms of inequalities, the nuanced legacies of coloniality, and the ways academic discourses about English as a global language affect these mechanisms (Kamwangamalu, 2010; Kubota, 2015). This study also contributes to the literatures on identity construction through language in postcolonial settings, questioning the prevalent framework of "conflict" used to account for multilingualism in North Africa, and the over-reliance on languages (as bounded entities) to explain socio-political dynamics and processes of meaning-making regarding identity and belonging.

Outline

Chapter 1 considers existing research and conceptualisation of English in the world, contrasting its theorisations with the evolution of frameworks to understand French in the world. Texts in both English and French are examined, looking for bridges and common themes. Apart from sporadic and

often anecdotic use of findings, there appears to have been very little crossover between research in the two languages, although concepts from the mid-20th century (such as Bourdieusian notions of capital or Ferguson's diglossia) can be found across the literatures. I assess how the Francophone and Anglophone conceptual frameworks overlap or complement each other before situating my doctoral project within a critical investigation of unequal Englishes, informed by concepts of translanguaging and relocalisation. Research looking specifically at English in Algeria is relatively recent compared to the plethora of works discussing the forms and functions of French, and therefore this chapter also considers how the academic frameworks for understanding the linguistic situation in the country have been informed by concepts from the Francophone and Anglophone research traditions.

In **chapter 2**, I present my methodological framework, based on an ethnographic approach and combining participant observation, unstructured interviews, analysis of the semiotic landscape and analysis of discourses. I conducted eleven months of fieldwork between November 2015 and December 2017, spread across four cities in Algeria, although the bulk of my research was undertaken in Algiers. This section also provides more information about the research settings and the key participants, whose voices are heard in discussion with mine throughout the thesis. Finally, I raise some of the ethical issues arising from my being a white European female from an institution located in a privileged area of the Global North [5] investigating languaging and knowledge production in the Global South.

Chapter 3 focuses on who learns and speaks English in contemporary Algeria, refining existing projections based on quantitative data to provide a more fine-grained analysis of the forms and modalities of English learning. Despite headlines talking about "language shift" there is no in-depth understanding of who learns or uses English in Algeria, where and to what extent; this chapter aims to provide an initial overview of learners and spaces. After discussing the visibility of English in the semiotic landscape, I focus on language policies, schools and universities. Spaces related to the education system (at the secondary but mostly at the tertiary level) provide the main opportunities for encountering practices linked to English. This refined understanding of spaces and trajectories for English learners and English users reveals the importance in considering both visible and invisible learning, and also the complex and multiple ways in which English is (re)defined, localised and appropriated. The focus on spaces and practices also introduces themes of neutrality, mobility, social inequality and the comparison with French, which will be discussed at length in later chapters.

In chapters 4 and 5, I situate the practices observed in Chapter 3 within their wider social, economic and political dynamics, in order to understand not just who learns what where, but also how they language and the meanings people ascribe to their practices and those of others.

Chapter 4 focuses on participants' main frames for making sense of language dynamics across the country: novelty, resisting French, (re)tracing a more "authentic" and connected Algerian-ness, but also constructing the "Other". Is the inclusion or promotion of English a mechanism to "imprison Algerians in one language" or can it be used to reclaim spaces previously held by a minority of French-

[5] see for instance Makoni (2019) on the Global North as a hierarchised space

speakers? Can the language be used politically to carve a "neutral" zone of belonging and communication, and re-imagine Algerian-ness? Can it be the solution to all political and social ills?

Chapter 5 refines the broad conclusions of the previous two chapters by foregrounding how the individual level inserts itself within local and global processes of social inequality and restructuring of identities. Although discourses of conflict and colonisation are prevalent at the group level, individual narratives emphasise the possibilities of spatial and social mobility through English. This chapter analyses how learners and users of English construct the language as a key towards opportunities, migration, and increasing social, economic and cultural capital. Global narratives of English as transformative because linked to mobility and human development are appropriated to discuss personal growth. Nonetheless, practices also hide the relocalisation of existing mechanisms of elite closure into English, facilitated by their enmeshing in local and international discourses of mastery, correctness and political responsibility. While who learns and uses English might be already skewed towards the practices and discourses of the urban (and often French-speaking) middle classes, what counts as "English" and who is rewarded for its inclusion in their linguistic repertoire reproduces existing social hierarchies.

The conclusion brings together the themes of identity, social mobility and relocalisation, outlines limitations and further research, including one project for which the author has already secured funding, and situates the contribution of the thesis within the broader fields of Sociolinguistics and Area Studies.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

This chapter situates the sociolinguistic study of English in the world within its main conceptual frameworks, from the notion of "spread" and World Englishes to relocalisation, translanguaging and unequal Englishes. To better understand narratives of "language replacement" in spaces where English was not the colonial language, I then examine the scholarship on French in the world before reviewing the literature on languages in Algeria. Quotes throughout will be in the language they were encountered in, in an effort to avoid further erasing the multilingual nature of research.

1.2 English in the world

1.2.1 The "spread" of English

The English language is often described as a "global" language, with estimates pointing to over 1.1 billion speakers worldwide (Ethnologue, n.d.). Enthusiastic accounts posit that 'no doubt English is truly the world's leading language today' (Schneider, 2011, p. 2), as it is used 'on all continents' either as a first or second language, represents the main lingua franca between speakers of different languages as well as the international language of aviation, academia, entertainment and business (amongst others), and supposedly plays the role of 'a primary gateway to better jobs and income, thus a better life' (Schneider, 2011, p. 2).

A first set of explanations described English as having "spread" from its so-called "birthplace" on the British Isles to "new" spaces, in part due to geo-historical factors such as colonisation and economic might (Crystal, 2003, pp. 29–59). Despite the colonial past, English has been 'embraced, appropriated, transformed' across the globe in an unstoppable movement of linguistic change (Schneider, 2011, pp. 2–

4), with many countries apparently shifting from having English considered a foreign language to having it as a second language (Graddol, 1997, p. 11). In such accounts, colonisation is the catalyst for the spread of a language which now represents a key to a "better life".

The second set of explanations offered for this "spread" is composed of socio-cultural and linguistic factors, combining monolingual bias towards the necessity of a common language with theories of cultural superiority and universality. English's status as "global" is conceived as inherently positive in these accounts, as 'the convenience of having a lingua franca available to serve global human relations and needs has come to be appreciated by millions' (Crystal, 2003, p. 30), with English supposedly providing 'a "glue" which brought people together and a medium which gave them common access to opportunities' (Crystal, 2003, p. 36). The idea that a common language is necessary for communication and automatically equates to 'common access to opportunities' is not neutral, but rests on implicit monolingual bias and belief in the possibility and desirability of a "universal language". As Sorlin (2012, p. 8) explains, 'les langues universelles comme standard reposent sur des présupposés idéologiques qui, et c'est la définition de l'idéologie, tendent à faire passer ce qui est profondément contingent et historique pour une loi naturelle et universalisante'[1]. In this particular case, the prevalence of English world-wide (what is profoundly contingent and historical) has historically been explained as due to the superior qualities of the language, which supposedly made it more appropriate as a global lingua franca (presented as a natural and universalising law). Recurring myths that English was easier, more logical, richer, more regular, more creative and therefore a better international language have been challenged by linguists (Sapir, quoted in Durand, 2001, pp. 43–48), but these discourses continue to resurface in media coverage and politicans' speeches and occasional academic writing. English becomes a language which is inherently more flexible and accommodating (Graddol, 1997, p. 6; Crystal, 2003, p. 30), or even equated to 'a gift to the globe, a "way of speaking, a mouth" to millions of people on this globe, often to people who would not be able to express themselves if not for English' (King, 2006, p. 27). If prevailing language ideologies postulate that a common language is deemed necessary and English is poised to fulfil that role world-wide, then its spread is "natural" and should be further encouraged. The idea that English has a set of essential attributes which make it a "gift to the globe" is offered as an explanation for its "spread".

Language ideologies form an integral part of conceptions of the world, definitions of group identity and understandings of language practices, underpinning 'not only linguistic form and use but also the very notion of the person and social group, as well as such fundamental social instituions as religious ritual, child socialisation, gender relations, the nation-state, schooling, and law' (Woolard, 1998, p. 3). These beliefs are often unexamined and taken as self-evident (Walters, 2011, p. 85, after Kroskrity 2004), and subsequently 'articulated by users as a rationalisation or justification of perceived language structure and use' (Silverstein, 1979: 193, quoted in Woolard, 1998, p. 4). Language ideologies are not separate from other beliefs about wider processes relating to morality, aesthetics or epistemology, from psychology to economics or pedagogy (Woolard, 1998, p. 3), and it is these 'ingrained, unques-

[1] universal languages as standard rest on ideological presuppositions which, and that is the very definition of ideology, tend to present what is profoundly contingent and historical for a natural and universalising law'

tioned beliefs about the way the world is, the way it has to be with respect to language' (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 2006, quoted in Dyers and Abongdia, 2010, p. 120) which inform language attitudes, defined as unconscious individual assessments (Dyers and Abongdia, 2010, p. 119, after Myers-Scotton 2006). Understanding language attitudes or language practices is therefore not possible without placing them within the context of the language ideologies which underlie them, even when they appear contradictory.

Because of the strong connotative powers of the term "ideology", the alternative notion of "discourse" is sometimes preferred, referring to Foucauldian notions of discourses as collectively constructed sets of statements which unconsciously structure the realm of the possible. In this thesis both terms will be used, with language ideology representing more specifically the beliefs about language, whereas discourses also refer to the structures of knowledge within which these ideologies are formed and reproduced.

Two of the most pervasive language ideologies are the conceptualisation of languages as 1) separate, discrete units which are 2) linked to a culture and a specific set of values. While these two sets of beliefs are independent, they are often found in conjunction, bolstered by centuries of nation-station ideologies constructing "one state-one nation-one language" as natural and logical (Woolard, 1998, pp. 16–18). Ingrained beliefs in the link between people and a bounded and easily name-able language obscure the omnipresence of language contact. Such beliefs pose multilingualism and linguistic change instead as problems to be solved (Bornes-Varol, 2011), with language ideologies of essentialism and purism echoing wider social concerns over identity. As Forlot (2009b, p. 24) points out,

> les discours de sens commun distillent encore des représentations fortement unificatrices et la tendance à rejeter les mélanges et les hybridités est à l'image des peurs de nos sociétés postmodernes à faire face à une diversité qui est pourtant partout autour de nous. Ceci est particulièrement vrai de certaines langues dont les distorsions sont vécues comme des atteintes à ce que l'on pense être les identités collectives, lesquelles ont été produites par la construction des états-nations[2].

Ideologies of nationalism also facilitate the equation of language and culture, with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of language use impacting on worldview (and therefore that language provides an insight in to the "true" nature of its speakers) still extremely popular in the media (Weber, 2015, p. 71). Bound within discourses of language as discrete carriers of culture is also the concept of "native speakers" and discourses of the "mother tongue" as individuals' "true" language and expression of self (Woolard, 1998, p. 16), and therefore of these language users as more "authentic" than others (Bucholtz, 2003). Notions of purism, authenticity and nationalism bolster ideologies of the existence and necessity of a "language standard" and "standard language". From a nation-state perspective, a single common (and dominant) lingua franca amongst one social group is deemed paramount for socio-economic development (Weber,

[2]common sense discourses continue to spread homogenising representations as well as the tendency to reject mixing and hybridity, reflecting the fears that our postmodern societies have of facing a diversity that is everywhere around us. This is particularly true of certain languages for which any distortion is experienced as an infringement of supposed collective identities, which have in fact been produced by the nation- and state-building process

2015, pp. 10–19). Especially in the study of Arabic-speaking societies, these ideologies have translated into a nearly-systematic reliance on concepts such as diglossia (cf. Ferguson, 1959; Fishman, 1967), where two varieties of one language or two languages are used in different domains and fulfill strictly differentiated functions, one being the high/prestige variety while the other is low/everyday. Facilitated by discourses of bounded languages and purism, diglossia-based explanatory frameworks in turn reinforce ideologies related to authenticity and competition, erasing hybridity and fluidity.

The perceived necessity of a single lingua franca facilitates readings of the world through a Eurocentric lens, privileging the study of European languages above others. Whether in suggesting that multilingualism should be "solved" by encouraging people to use 'an international language as close to their native tongue as possible' and only labelling European languages as international (Durand, 2001, pp. 100–101), or in focusing research on linguistic repertoires which include European languages (as highlighted by Kubota (2015, p. 33)), academic discourses systematically foreground some practices and erase others. The African continent in particular is systematically conceptualised in terms of its colonial linguistic heritage as "French-speaking", "English-speaking", "Portuguese-speaking", etc, whether or not these categories reflect anything about the realities of linguistic repertoires and language practices. The use of minority languages to define the practices of populations is never applied to Europe, as Dubreuil asks 'en quoi la France aujourd'hui ne serait-elle pas arabophone si l'Algérie est francophone?[3]' (2008, p. 173). Research often replicates the impression of a clear-cut line between languages labelled as "local" or "home", defined as "true mothertongues" and more prestigious "global" ones, supposedly necessary for national and personal development.

Triumphalism about the place of the English language in the world emanating from British organisations is not a new phenomenon, and the wordings used highlight the coloniality of discourses about English in the world. In 1880, the President of the Statistical Society of Great Britain proclaimed:

> Of all Western people ours is already the most numerous; and when we contemplate the further spread of the English language over Namibia and Australia, and the habits of order, instincts of self-government, and love of liberty which are the inborn characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon race (…) we may feel confidence in the future. (quoted in Bolton, 2006, pp. 296–297).

Racialised conceptualisations of English allow the language to be equated to the culture and worldview of white settlers (in the case of Namibia and Australia), and a "gift" of the coloniser to the colonised, who are thus given a voice thanks to the "generosity" of the invaders. From a colonial perspective on history, English can thus be seen as inherently positive, because benevolent and supposedly linked to values such as democracy and modernity.

A decolonial perspective on the contrary supports the examination of these discourses of "spread" and "triumph" and how they epistemologically and ontologically point to the perpetuation of colonial structures of knowledge-making about the Global South. Grosfoguel (2007, pp. 219–220) highlights that 'coloniality allow us to understand the continuity of colonial forms of domination after the end

[3] why would France today not be also considered Arabic-speaking if Algeria is French-speaking?

of colonial administrations, produced by colonial cultures and structures in the modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system'. One perspective on coloniality and language is to consider English in former British colonies as cultural and scientific colonisation. If language is tied to identity, and English has "spread" through colonial conquest and rule, some authors argue that it is a threat to indigenous languages and therefore indigenous cultures, leading to a world of homogeneity and a direct continuation of British and American imperialism (Phillipson, 2010, 2017). Criticised as 'the official vehicle and the magic formula to colonial elitedom' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1981/2005, p. 12), which although touted as equally accessible to all is in fact restricted to the elites (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2018), the use of English after independence is equated to a colonisation of the mind, as it discredits knowledge from other languages. It represents a narrowing of the ontological and epistological fields, as research and thinking conducted in a single language lead to 'un appauvrissement de la variété des ressources heuristiques'[4] and therefore 'l'uniformisation des modes de pensée'[5] (Brahima, 2014, p. 480). In the quotes presented above, the coloniality of concepts of "spread" of English is thus two-fold: in presenting it as a neutral (or beneficial) unavoidable event, and in foregrounding a monolingual view of the world where the aim is to find and promote a "universal language" to give a voice to all.

The concept of "spread", whether taken within a critical or celebratory frame, has low explanatory power to understand language practices across the world today. It remains vague, steeped in colonial language and structures of knowledge production, and focuses solely on English to the exclusion of social, political and linguistic dynamics. If people are picking up this code "elsewhere", then the impact it is having on social organisation, cultural life and political structures must be examined as well. Although there are some acknowledgement of the social, political and discursive shifts which English might bring (Graddol, 2006, p. 12), in overviews such as the titles mentioned above the notion of spread entails the idea of a centre and one code which is being "adopted" or "used" in other parts, often erasing the fact that language does not occur in a vacuum. What is therefore paramount is analysing the conditions and impact of this so-called "spread of English" beyond simply stating that English is everywhere or is the global language. What this global language means to different people, how it is integrated within existing social worlds and how it disrupts and reinforces them must be explored and questioned. In addition, how discourses of English as benevolent or neo-colonial are read and appropriated within contexts where another European language was the colonial language has been under-researched.

The main explanatory model used to theorise the notion of "spread" without erasing the colonial experience is based on the World Englishes approach, developed in the 1980s by Braj Kachru. This approach focuses on the diversity and creativity of English users, beyond what had traditionally been termed the "native speakers" (Kachru, 1992, p. 1). Observing how 'nativisation and acculturation (…) have affected the grammatical structure and use of the language according to the local needs and conventions' (Kachru & Smith 2008: 177, quoted in Saraceni, 2015, p. 4), it seeks to explain, describe and legitimise varieties of English stemming from colonial encounters. Labelling them Englishes allows

[4] an impoverishment of the variety of heuristic resources
[5] uniformisation of ways of thinking

researchers to 'consciously emphasis[e] the autonomy and plurality of English languages worldwide, whereas the phrase "varieties of English" suggests the heteronomy of such varieties to the common core of "English"' (Bolton, 2006, p. 289). The concept of World Englishes is key to theorising how, where and why English is "spreading" by representing '(1) the types of spread of English worldwide, (2) the patterns of acquisition, and (3) the functional domains in which English is used internationally' (Bolton, 2006, p. 292). It helps researchers question the notion of a unique "centre", where a standard code is produced and passed down to the rest of the world, contending instead with local linguistic and social dynamics to investigate how English is appropriated and new "centres" created.

Central to this model is the concept of three circles representing 'the fact that English plays different roles and exists in different forms for different people in different places' (Saraceni, 2015, p. 51), based on historical, sociolinguistic and literary factors (Kachru, 1992, p. 3). In the Inner Circle, English is seen as the mother tongue and the de facto official language, and the UK, Ireland, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are defined as belonging to this group of 'traditional bases of English' (Kachru, 1992, p. 2). English "spread" to these countries as a result of settler colonialism, also termed the first diaspora. Englishes there have experienced endonormative stabilisation, with the development of standardised lexical, grammatical and phonological features distinct from a British Standard, and the development of differentiation within the variety (Schneider, 2011). The Inner Circle remains a historical and cultural "core" for Englishes.

The countries of the Outer Circle are former British colonies, where English is used predominantly for intra-national functions in formal and official situations but "local" languages are used in informal settings (e.g. Singapore, India, Nigeria) (Kachru, 1996, pp. 135–138). By focusing studies on the domains, functions and attitudes regarding English within the Outer Circle, World Englishes contributed to definitions of English as pluricentric. It emphasised the idea that 'English belongs to those who use it' (Schneider, 2011, pp. 32, 53), or in Rushdie's formulation, 'English, no longer an English language, now grows from many roots' (quoted in Saraceni, 2015, p. 66). The use of English in literature and writers' attempt to consciously reshape the language to make it reflect different social and linguistic contexts (Saraceni, 2015, p. 64) are an example of how the overlap of domains, functions and attitudes towards English in former British colonies help to better understand the practices and symbols of the language within certain social contexts. The domains, functions and attitudes regarding English are therefore impacted by the historical conditions under which English users "came" to these territories and other users in turn learnt, spoke and appropriated these linguistic practices within their wider repertoire. For instance, Higgins' (2009) study of English in Tanzania underlines that there is no "core" version of English which then evolved into a myriad of distinct local "variations", but rather a continuum from monologic use (e.g. in education or beauty pageants) to fused lects and appropriation. Even though English still has associations with "the other" (e.g. in terms of Westernised norms of female beauty) and is a strong marker of prestige and thereby elite closure, it 'does not evoke the voice of colonialism or neo-colonialism' (Higgins, 2009, p. 37).

Appropriation and local adaptation by speakers and writers in the Outer Circle still relies on ideas

of universality. Chinua Achebe in particular underlines the dynamic tension between claims to universalism and local adaptation, stating for instance that 'the African writer should aim to use English in a way that brings out his[6] message best without altering the language to the extent that its value as a medium of international exchange will be lost. He should aim at fashioning out an English which is at once universal and able to carry his peculiar experience' (Achebe, 1975, p. 57). Universalism is equated to neutrality, equal belonging and global links, and the persistance of the former colonial language as an official or co-official language after independence is attributed (in hindsight) to its representing 'a common and neutral medium of communication which would help surmount ethnic divisions and bild a sense of national unity, as well as maintaining connections with the international community' (Seargeant, 2012, p. 73). Kachru himself exclaims that 'we now have a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic universal language', and describes the 'ecstasy' of English as the facilitation of access to knowledge and the sharing of research across the world (1996, p. 138). Writers such as Rushdie remind their readers that it is not enough to simply 'reclaim' English but that the language needs to be decolonised and 'remade in other images' to avoid the reproduction of colonial hierarchies (1982 article in the Times, quoted in Saraceni, 2015, p. 66). The dissociation of English with its colonial roots and the emphasis instead on its status as a "global language" within a globalised world can facilitate claims of neutrality.

Nevertheless, claims that the language is now a neutral code mask the hierarchical relations between various parts of the world and continued descriptions of users of English from the Inner Circle as the only "native speakers" (Bruthiaux, 2003, p. 170, Canagarajah, 2007, p. 89, Gollin-Kies et al., 2015, p. 36). These particular justifications of appropriation thus reproduce language ideologies inherited from the colonial period, including a strong monolingual bias, the concept of a "universal language", and viewing European languages as offering more oppportunities.

The last of the circles within this model, the Expanding Circle (countries such as Japan, Spain or Indonesia), includes areas where English exists solely as a foreign language with an inter-national (lingua franca) function (Honna, 2006, p. 115). As in the Outer Circle, the language becomes a 'commodity around which a powerful fetish is building up' and a 'powerful divider' between users and non-users (Rajagopalan, 2006, p. 153), acting as a potent device for elite closure (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 1993). Nonetheless, it does not have a formal status and domains of use are much more restricted than in the Outer Circle.

Nevertheless, the concept of the Outer Circle should not erase the differentiated realities of colonial legacies. Supposedly "Anglophone" countries on the African continent show large variation in terms of functions, forms and social impact, with the discourses and practices regarding English in countries such as Zambia, Somalia and Sierra Leone, which experienced different forms of colonial rule, differing wildly (Schmied, 1991, p. 2). Strict delineations between the circles are not supported by sociolinguistic data (Bruthiaux, 2003), and recent research into the relevance of theoretical frameworks

[6] Achebe's use of the masculine singular pronoun in this particular passage, while reflecting the predominant usage in the "Western" media at the time, should not obscure the significant contribution of female authors to African literature.

to understanding daily practices has emphasised the need to move away from a 'geography-based model' towards a 'person-based model of English speakers' (Yano, 2009, p. 212).

Most World Englishes research has concentrated on Outer Circle varieties. This led in to the development in the 2000s of the field of English as a Lingua Franca, which focuses on the traits and uses of English in the Expanding Circle as it 'has become a global language, and (...) the majority of its non-native speakers (NNSs) use it as a lingua franca among themselves rather than as a 'foreign' language to communicate with its NSs [Native Speakers]' (J. Jenkins, 2007, p. xi). Often based on corpus linguistics methods, research within this framework seeks to investigate the grammar, syntax and phonology of these emerging varieties of English, record their similarities as well as to promote their legitimacy as a 'branch of modern English' (J. Jenkins, 2007, p. 17) and therefore their suitability as pedagogical models (Seidlhofer, 2001). While this focus on identifying features and communicative strategies remains, research on English as a Lingua Franca has progressively moved away from describing a stable code to investigate how users draw on their shared linguistic repertoire. Canagarajah (2007, p. 925) explains:

> Because of the diversity at the heart of this communicative medium, LFE[7] is intersubjectively constructed in each context of interaction. The form of this English is negotiated by each set of speakers for their purposes. The speakers are able to monitor each other's language proficiency to determine mutually the appropriate grammar, phonology, lexical range, and pragmatic conventions that would ensure intelligibility. Therefore, it is difcult to describe this language a priori.

Within spaces where "English" is defined as a set of bridging communicative practices, the language also functions as a marker of 'prestige, style and modernity', indexing Western consumerism but also creativity and wealth, thereby explaining its use omnipresence in the semiotic landscape beyond immediately apparent communicative needs (Bolton, 2012, p. 31). Research has thus focused on determining the forms and domains of use in order to better understand the dynamics of English in the Expanding Circle (J. Jenkins et al., 2011).

Some critical accounts have attempted to separate International English (as an alternative term for English in the world) and Global English, with the latter designating a specific range of linguistic practices linked to digital technologies and the neo-liberal economy and dominated by the Inner Circle (Bolton, 2006, p. 263). Similarly, as the use of English as a medium of instruction in higher education receives increasing academic attention, the question of *what* English and *whose* practices is invisibilised, and English is instead is taken as a "natural" condition and result of international mobility, the marketisation of higher education and globalisation of knowledge and employment opportunities (Hultgren, 2014, pp. 249–250). Although there have also been many initiatives towards the re-legitimisation of what have been termed "local languages" in education, from changes in the medium of instruction towards new conceptualisations of literacies[8], there remains a semantic confusion between language

[7]Lingua Franca English, called English as a Lingua Franca by Jenkins and Seidlhofer to underline the absence of a single "variety" but rather constant adaption of linguistic repertoire to the situation of communication

[8]See for instance Chimbutane, 2017; Kazeem, 2018; Lüpke and Weidl, 2017

and quality of teaching, with education reforms promoted by international institutions (and sometimes domestic organisations as well) pushing for a switch to English as the medium of instruction as a way of improving the quality of education (Park & Wee, 2012, pp. 179–185).

In conclusion, although the concept of "spread" is the most widespread in describing English in the world, it remains problematic because it is often used in a politically-neutralised way, negating the historical and political forces that have made the language a prestige form of communication in very different situations across the globe and erasing the differences in the processes of appropriation, learning and use. In a report for the British Council published in 2006, Graddol prefaced his conclusions by remarking that 'it is difficult to recapture the sense of complacency evident amongst some native English speakers in the mid-1990s [...]. The global "triumph" of English was understood as a done deal' (2006, p. 10). The emotional value of the idea of a "triumph" of a language and its ties to a certain group a people (its official "native speakers") show the importance of a historicised understanding not only of the place of English in the world but also of discourses seeking to explain its place and role, and the language ideologies which underpin them.

Although the World Englishes framework, complemented by developments in English as a Lingua Franca, focuses on acknowledging the diversity of language practices which are called "English" and promoting parity of esteem between these practices, the erasure of the coloniality of the language and the globalising discourses around English as a universal or neutral code serve to further reinforce the primacy of Inner Circle varieties. Furthermore, discourses of "English" perpetuate the notion that there is 'an identifiable language' which would respond to this label, constructing what Pennycook terms 'the illusion of English' (2007: 104, quoted in Park and Wee, 2012, p. 106).

1.2.2 The relocalisation of English

Even though World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca have played an important role in decentring the study of English, they have been criticised by postcolonial scholars as still too bound to the nation-state (Bruthiaux, 2003, p. 165), too focused on the language varieties of the elites (Gargesh, 2006, p. 96), essentialising differences (Lok, 2012, p. 420) and ignoring practices and the 'ongoing negotiation of language' (Pennycook, 2009, p. 201). The concept of spread, which still underlies a framework based on Circles, has been questioned from the perspective of focusing on users, redefining the concept into an understanding that the language itself was not spreading but that rather the number of people aware of or in contact with English was increasing (Cooper, 1982, p. 17). Nevertheless, describing "spread" as contact with a language remains problematic as it takes "English" as an entity which can be transplanted, described or with which one can be in contact. As Saraceni explains in the case of World Englishes, 'positing the existence of different, discrete varieties of English presupposes that these varieties are relatively homogeneous, stable and bounded systems but struggles to take into account mobility and mixing as fundamental traits of language as social practice' (Saraceni, 2015, p. 6). In the last ten years, research from critical sociolinguistics has questioned the notion of language as a

system which can be described a priori and is then used or misused by speakers, creating variations, and focused instead on hybridity and communicative functions (Saraceni, 2015, p. 131). Englishes are not bounded varieties but instead are negotiated by specific speakers in specific context of interaction, as users draw on various sets of shared semiotic resources in order to communicate (Seargeant et al., 2012, p. 511).

Another approach which questions the relevance of language labels is to consider not that "English" is being spread but that practices are being relocalised in English. Understanding language practices and linguistic situations therefore requires taking into account 'the perspectives, the language ideologies, the local ways of knowing, through which language is viewed' (Pennycook, 2010, p. 128), in the sense that language is both the choices we make but also the retrospective creation of these choices (Pennycook, 2010, pp. 137–138). Makoni and Pennycook (2007), in their critique of discourses about "English", deconstruct the idea that understanding English in the world requires mapping how the language is spreading and how this neatly bounded entity might be modified in different settings. Instead, they suggest to focus on what people do with language, or to use Bakhtin's terminology, how people language. Understanding how practices are being relocalised entails reconsidering the label and the set of practices it indexes as 'one way of realising social activities via a set of linguistic resources' (Saraceni, 2015, p. 58). Relocalising also means questioning the very tenet that English has been adapted (which still start from the assumption that it had a core or point of origin), and envisaging instead that existing socio-linguistic practices have a new name (Pennycook, 2010, p. 197). Using the example of hip hop, Pennycook questions the idea that linguistic practices can be understood as a spread of the English language from the UK or US core but rather 'engage instead with the possibility of multiple, co-present, local origins of English' (2010, p. 208).

Originally coined as trawsieithu by Cen Williams when discussing the practices of Welsh speakers (Lewis et al., 2012), translanguaging as an approach was developed further by Ofelia García when researching multilinguals in the United States and 'considers the language practices of bilinguals not as two autonomous language systems as has been traditionally the case, but as one linguistics repertoire with features that have been societally constructed as belonging to two separate languages' (García & Li, 2014, p. 2). Language is understood as a 'repertoire of multilingual, multimodal, multisensory and multi-semiotic resources that language users orchestrate in sense- and meaning-making' rather than a set of distinct bounded and labeled speech forms (Zhu et al., 2017, p. 413). Fluid and integrated linguistic repertoires go beyond traditional concepts such as "code-switching" and "code-mixing", which remain based on the existence of separate "codes" that can be mixed or switched one from the other (Creese & Blackledge, 2015, p. 22). Similarly, the concept of heteroglossia alludes to 'not only - in fact not principally - (...) the simultaneous use of "languages", but rather refers to the coexistence of different competing ideological points of view, whether constituted in a single national "language' (as Bakhtin proposed) or within the complex communicative repertoires in play in late modern societies' (Blackledge & Creese, 2014, p. 5). English therefore can be analysed from the perspective of the ideologies surrounding it as a concept, their socio-historical construction, and the linguistic practices which derive from it, and enables the description of practices from a perspective of translanguaging

(doing with language beyond artificial boundaries) rather than alternating between codes or appropriating/modifiying others' code.

Importantly, both translanguaging and heteroglossia decouple the link between languages and identity, as although linguistic resources may be drawn on to perform identities, there is no equivalence and no fixed relationship between language and identity (Creese & Blackledge, 2015, p. 20). While this ontological and pedagogical perspective is fundamentally transformative (García & Li, 2014), it also acknowledges the symbolic power (and unavoidability) of named varieties. In effect, 'you may or may not have a "mother tongue" as Derrida argues, but you cannot avoid "being born" in one or more language(s), to have them inscribed in your body (Mignolo, 2000, p. 229, quoted in García and Li, 2014, p. 18). Translanguaging as a framework accounts for both the ever-changing deployment of linguistic resources by speakers and the broader socio-political structures which shape these practices (García & Li, 2014, p. 18). Canagarajah's (2013) formulation of translingualism echoes translanguaging, emphasising both the arbitrary nature of linguistic boundaries (their lack of ontological status) and their continued importance for speakers through the reification of language labels, and focuses specifically on rethinking classroom practices around English within translingual practices.

Nonetheless, translanguaging and heteroglossia have mostly been developed with regards to European and North American settings, where they are linked to superdiversity and migration. Emerging research is now applying this particular framework to understanding translingual encounters and practices in India and Southern Africa (Makalela, 2015; McKinney, 2016; Motlhaka and Makalela, 2016; Pallavi, 2018; Reilly, 2018, amongst others). However, translanguaging is not a new urban phenomenon resulting from globalisation and super-diversity. Although one can argue that there has been a prevalent monolingual bias in most research in the Global North, in addition to the state-organised erasure of multilingualism, translanguaging whether in education, at home or in the streets has been a daily reality for most people across the globe for hundreds of years (cf. Makalela, 2016). Furthermore, literature on multilingualism, including in Africa, have given pre-eminence to practices involving European languages and few studies have engaged with pre-colonial multilingual realities (Makalela, 2018; van den Avenne, 2017).

Nevertheless, alternative frameworks exist. Ubuntu, as 'a philosophy of being that locates identity and meaning-making within a collective approach as opposed to an individualistic one' (Oviawe, 2016, p. 3), and a way of drawing attention to the reciprocal, interdependent and mutually-beneficial connections between the individual and their community (Oviawe, 2016, p. 3), can be used to make sense of language practices. Like translanguaging, ubuntu starts with multilingualism as the norm rather than a "problem" to solve, and both offer ways to rethink education systems. While translanguaging draws attention to individuals' negotiation of their linguistic repertoire, ubuntu's underlying concept of 'I am because you are, you are because we are' (Makalela, 2015, p. 828) allows for a nuanced understanding of languaging as drawing meaning from the individual communication situation, the wider social dynamics and the mechanisms of knowledge transmission as reinscribed in time and across the colonial divide (Makalela, 2015, p. 828).

The commonality between relocalisation, translanguaging and ubuntu is their insistence on moving away from a focus on a static description of varieties, variation and functions or attitudes. They emphasise instead the fluidity of linguistic ecosystems, derived from increased social and geographical mobility (Seargeant, 2012, p. 139) or from an increased recognition of multilingual realities (Makalela, 2016). In common with the research focus chosen for my research, the emphasis is on the articulation between individual and group practices and discourses, taking into account how local planes interact with global dynamics and discourses around language, identity, and social worth.

1.2.3 Unequal Englishes

Diversity, hybridity and translanguaging are not divorced from existing power relations and inequalities, and therefore from the mechanisms of commodification and elite closure mentioned above. Beyond seeing the relocalisation of practices through English as inherently liberating, Phillipson (2010, 2017) argues that the language cannot be separated from the neoliberal agenda of corporations and the small group of governments whom it advantages, thereby promoting Westernisation/Americanisation and increasing inequalities world-wide. Studies of translingual practices, mostly involving young people in large urban areas, ignore the prevalence of essentialist and purist language ideologies elsewhere, including in higher education settings, and approaches which take hybridity as the norm may in fact entrench the dominance of English and resulting inequalities and loss of cultural diversity (Hultgren, 2014). Other perspectives attempt to reconcile both transformative and oppressive aspects of the sociolinguistics of English in the world, conceptualising the language as both site and means of struggle (Pennycook, 1994, p. 267) and therefore English as a 'simultaneous instrument for liberation and continuous oppression' (Lee & Norton 2009: 282, quoted in Tupas and Rubdy, 2015, p. 2).

Rather than simply considering Englishes as either (or conjointly) liberating or oppressing, Tupas points to the need to investigate the shapes and dynamics of unequal Englishes, in the sense of how they can be understood as linguistically equal but politically and socially uneven (Tupas, 2015, p. 3). As Tollefson suggests, 'at a time when English is widely seen as a key to the economic success of nations and the economic well-being of individuals, the spread of English also contributes to significant social, political, and economic inequalities', concluding that 'there is something rather bizarre in the belief that if everyone learned English, everyone would be better off' (2000: 8, quoted in Pennycook, 2007b, p. 102). The question is thus who can acquire hybrid codes, who is entitled to and rewarded for fluid language practices, and who becomes the arbiter of these supposedly "free" practices? In sum, 'can all English users regardless of their racial, gender, socioeconomic, and other background equally transgress linguistic boundaries?' (Kubota, 2015, p. 33).

Taking into account the socio-political context of language practices also enables the questioning of the ideological lens chosen by the researcher. For Duchêne and Heller (2007, p. 11), 'perhaps we should be asking instead who benefits and who loses from understanding languages the way we do, what is at stake for whom, and how and why languages serves as a terrain for competition'. While

they were discussing the systematic choice of a "language conflict" lens to understand the social world, this question is also applicable to the promotion of pluralist perspectives of English and transformative conceptions of translingual or translanguaging practices, and the extent to which this approach furthers the symbolic capital of the researcher themself (Kubota, 2015, p. 36). As Pennycook (2007a, pp. 101–102) argues, instead of using the concept of "English as an international language" to gloss over structural inequalities and essentialise the language,

> we need to understand how English is involved in global flows of culture and knowledge, how English is used and appropriated by users of English round the world, how English colludes with multiple domains of globalisation, from popular culture to unpopular politics, form international capital to local transaction, from ostensible diplomacy to purported peace-keeping, from religious proselytising to secular resistance.

Focusing solely on concepts of hybridity and translanguaging within postcolonial contexts only provides a partial understanding of local practices and their insertion and reframing of global flows of people, capital and knowledge, by erasing power relations within and between regions. My research thus aims to bring a case study and set of tools and questions to interrogate these transformations.

In addition, it is important to consider not just theoretical conceptions of practices but also how language users themselves make sense of their practices. In other words, academic arguments regarding languages (such as Serbian and Croatian being the same language, or Chinese being considered a family of languages) do not matter as much as the beliefs of millions of language users for whom these labels are real and potent (Joseph, 2006, p. 26). As Suleiman underlines, what is relevant to people 'are the available conceptualisations of the language, rather than those of modern linguistics' (Suleiman, 2013, p. 266), and therefore language ideologies and the labels which derive from them form a key part of understanding linguistic repertoires and social words (Suleiman, 2013, p. 266). Folk linguistics, or research into 'what non-linguists know, and what they feel, about language topics' (Albury, 2017, p. 39), is an important tool to explore how local power hierarchies are effected through language as well as bringing into one conversation the sometimes dissonant voices of academic and local stories of language change (Albury, 2017).

While languages as bounded entities existing outside of practices might be a figment of the imagination, these imaginings are nonetheless crucial in structuring how people make sense of the world around them, and conversely these boundaries are erected through the beliefs that users have in their reality (Pennycook, 2007a, p. 95). Conceptualising translanguaging practices as both "normal" (because everywhere and used by everyone) and transgressive (because ignoring formal boundaries between codified languages) does provide a more egalitarian and inclusive basis for pedagogical tools not based on social privilege, but it risks erasing other relations of power. European missionaries, followed by the full apparatus of European colonisation created bounded, frozen and named languages, which were later often utilised in demands for independence or in the creation of newly authentic national identities (Saraceni & Jacob, 2019). Simply discarding those labels because they do not correspond to how people actually use language in their day-to-day life ignores the potent realities of the naming process (Li, 2018). In addition, many inherently translingual practices are too far removed from the centre

of the formal linguistic market for any attempt at legitimation not to echo colonial and postcolonial strategies of stratification. For instance, while much research has been produced on Sheng, there is no doubt that English retains primacy in terms of prestige and access to education and employment (Higgins, 2009, pp. 120–149).

Academic modellings do not always translate or trickle down into popular perceptions. The articulation of transformative appropaches such as translanguaging and the focus of "folk linguistics" on how users make sense of their world has helped to shape my research into a co-created discussion with my participants of how Algerians label and frame their own practices, whether or not they correspond to the categories which would be used by researchers. Furthermore, considerations of unequal Englishes have not been applied to countries where another European language is used as a prestige variety, and how practices and discourses are relocalised in English in these settings. There is little understanding of how global discourses are appropriated and which concepts and ideas resonate with specific local context, whether it be "linguistic imperialism", "English as decolonised" or "unequal Englishes".

1.3 English in "French-speaking countries"

1.3.1 French in the world

The main paradigm used to investigate French outside of France is that of the "francophonie", used for both the political and cultural organisation (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie - International Organisation of the Francophonie - OIF, often shortened to "Francophonie" with a capital "F") and the concept to denote speaking French ("francophonie"). The similarity between the two terms has led to confusions in their usage, with the actions and pronouncements of the institution being equated to practices across the globe. While originally put forward by French-speaking heads of states, cultural elites and civil servants of former French colonies in Africa, North America and Asia, the Francophonie has over the last three decades been progressively centralised by the French government and re-claimed as a foreign policy instrument instead of a cooperation forum (Erfurt, 2018). With the institutional Francophonie seen more and more as a French-directed effort, conceptualising French in the world has often limited itself to concerns with French political speeches and initiatives, ignoring discourses and practices which did not stem from the "Inner Circle" (to paraphrase the World Englishes framework). While institutional summits have discussed the possibility of recognising a "francopolyphonie" within their programme and statutes, academic discussions often emphasise French reluctance to acknowledge other standards, concluding that 'la francophonie est encore bien éloignée de ce qu'on connaît pour l'anglais, l'espagnol et le portugais'[9] (Pöll, 2001, p. 32). There is a certain semantic shift between the francophonie and the Francophonie, and systematic over-reporting of French policy-makers' attitudes at the expense of practices and discourses in other parts of the world.

[9]the francophonie is still far removed from what we know for English, Spanish and Portuguese

Even though the idea of a "plural French" as 'un ensemble stratifié de variétés nationales dont chacun met en pratique une large partie du fonds commun selon un découpage qui lui est propre'[10] (Quemada, 1990, p. 142) exists, it is rarely understood as a series of "World Frenches" and more as variation within one language (Clas & Ouoba, 1990; Francard, 1994; Provenzano, 2011). The notion of separate varieties is often decried as an attempt to marginalise certain language practices (Tabi Manga, 1990, p. 2): as all languages "borrow" terms from others, there are no reasons for "borrowings" from African languages to lead to a separate variety when Anglicisms making their way into French from the metropole do not (Afeli, 1990, pp. 6–8). Promotion of endogenous norms should therefore be undertaken through the integration of their "peculiarities" into a dictionary of "diverse French" or "Francophone vocabularies" (Quemada, 1990). Acknowledgement of variation gathered strength in the 1970s, favoured by a move away from ideologies of purism and centralisation during the oil crises of the 1970s, although its institutional and academic impact was initially small (Klinkenberg, 2008, pp. 26–28).

Africa is generally understood as the largest and fastest-growing French-speaking community, with 44% of the global population of "daily speakers" living on the continent (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, 2019). As with any language, how to count the number of speakers, who would qualify as a "speaker" and how this could be determined is fraught with ontological and methodological difficulties, but 2018 estimates report 300 million French speakers (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, 2018). Smaller studies give us a glimpse of language practices in specific settings and generational dynamics, with French in sub-Saharan Africa becoming more depoliticised, more functional and seen less often as replacing or displacing local practices (Diallo, 2011, 2018). The OIF's financial support for African languages (e.g. Ecoles des Langues Nationales en Afrique) and discourses of championing diversity against "English" and the ills of globalisation have therefore been received more favourably over the past three decades. Albaugh argues that the French government's promotion of mother tongue education contrasts with English-speaking countries' 'ambivalence' (quoted in Djite, 2008, pp. 43–44), although debates continue over the sincerity of French efforts. "Plurilingualism" as a concept is being used to mask the promotion of the French language, a priority apparent both in speeches and policy documents (Wright, 2006, p. 48, see also Majumdar, 2012). While French is an integral part of many people's linguistic repertoire, it is not considered an African language (Diallo, 2018), and African-centric standards of French, while existing in practice, are not recognised in discourses (Bavoux, 2008, p. 11).

The focus on "French" and the relative paucity of studies of endogenous norms is even more apparent in France itself, where despite an abundance of research on regional languages such as Breton, Occitan or Provençal (see for instance Laks, 1984; Marcellesi et al., 2003), studies on regional Frenches remain rare and extremely recent (Mooney, 2016, pp. 1–2). As Mooney observes, 'diatopic variation in contemporary varieties of French has received relatively little attention when compared with the large body of sociolinguistic literature on geographically-based variation and change in English and other

[10] a stratified set of national varieties where each variety uses a large part of the common core according to its own rules and boundaries

languages' (Mooney, 2016, p. 1). Research into variation of French appears not to have integrated conceptual advances and debates which have existed in regional languages studies since the 1970s, such as on "polynomie" et "pluricentrisme". The former denotes not only the absence of a single standard but also that this unique standard is not a requirement to teaching, learning or promotion, with the latter indicating the presence of several non-hierarchical standards for the same language (Pöll, 2001, pp. 30–32). Unlike with English and the proliferation of new labels and subsequent debates over essentialisation (and the quest for the "authentic" speaker, see Bucholtz, 2003), French appears to remain solely as a polysemic term, with only occasionally a qualifier apposed: français "de Belgique", "du Québec" or "d'Algérie"[11]. Moreover, racist divisions persists in some France-based academic writing between African Frenches as resulting from 'badly learnt French' as opposed to European and North American Frenches as 'awareness of difference between practices and the Parisian standard' (Bavoux, 2008, p. 11).

Conceptions of French as bounded and unitary have continued to dominate despite the development in the 1980s of the field of creolitics, with authors such as Prudent questioning the usefulness of concepts of diglossia and separate languages to understand postcolonial language situations, as the dichotomy between languages did not reflect language practices and labelling seemed completely arbitrary (Prudent, 1980/1999, p. 122). Building on Césaire, Senghor and Damas's 1930s Négritude movement, the field of creolitics has developed the most consistent critique of the F/francophonie paradigm, and has also proved influential in the development of Francophone and Anglophone postcolonial studies through authors such as Edouard Glissant (Gyssels, 2013; Hendrikson, 2013). Already in the 1930s, Aimé Césaire called for Africans and people of African descent in the Caribbean and Europe to 'négrifier la langue française' (Confiant, 2004, p. 246), in effect an appropriation of language practices and norms, which would be taken up again by Glissant in the 1960s. Notions of creolité and diversalité (Bernabé et al., 1989; Confiant, 2004) go beyond ideas of equality and representations of norms to question the validity of these norms in the first place. Similar to the later concept of translanguaging, créolité both recognises the reality of named languages but places the linguistic practices of the user at the centre of reality:

> Hors donc de tout fétichisme, le langage sera, pour nous, l'usage libre, responsable, créateur d'une langue. Ce ne sera pas forcément du français créolisé ou réinventé, du créole francisé ou réinventé, mais notre parole retrouvée et finalement décidée. Notre singularité exposée-explosée dans la langue jusqu'à ce qu'elle s'affermisse dans l'être.[12] (Bernabé et al., 1989, p. 47)

Writing two decades later, Confiant reiterates this call for 'le mélange, le partage des ancêtres et des identités, le non-cloisonnement des imaginaires'[13], this time labelling the process "diversalité" (Confi-

[11] Some authors draw a contrast between "le français en Algérie" et "le français d'Algérie", the former referring to practices and the latter to norms. Nonetheless, use of an adjective to refer to different "Frenches" (Belgian French, Quebecois French, Algerian French…) is extremely rare.

[12] Away from all fetishism, language will mean, for us, free, responsible, creative use of language. It will not necessarily be creolised or reinvented French, frenchified or reinvented Creole, but our speech found and finally decided. Our singularity exposed-exploded in language until it becomes stronger in the being.

[13] mixture, the sharing of ancestors and identities, the non-partitioning of the imaginary

ant, 2004, p. 252).

Nevertheless, both terms have remained only as part of a literary manifesto, mostly understood as demands for the recognition of creoles and of endogenous norms of French, and were not developed as a conceptual framework. Although occasionally mentioned in sociolinguistics research which focuses on the Caribbean or the institutional Francophonie, these concepts are not found in general theorisations of French in the world. In fact, there are very few works which consider French in the world as a system in the way English in the world has been systematised as World Englishes or Schneider's dynamic model of postcolonial Englishes (Kachru, 1992; Schneider, 2011). Instead, the scholarship on the sociolinguistics of French in the world has mostly focused on 1) spread and retreat, 2) norms and appropriation, 3) plurilinguisme.

1.3.2 Conflict and competition

French in the world or "le français hors de France" is nearly systematically understood through the prism of conflict with English, both in French- and English-language publications. English is seen as a "threat" to the global presence (and importance) of French, and therefore both discourses and practices around the language are described as a response to English's perceived domination. For instance, English is seen as threatening the place of French as the "language of modernity" or "the language of science", especially in Africa, as governments and higher education institutions shift their medium of instructions, scholars publish in English or the latter becomes more visible online. In the early 1990s scholars noted that 'at the state level, francophone countries are turning to the English-speaking world' and that 'educated individuals' were adding English to their linguistic repertoire in the hope of social mobility (Djite 1991: 116, quoted in Chaudenson, 1993, p. 403). Language change is described as a shift and a zero-sum game, with English "replacing" French rather than adding to it, compounded by French political pronouncements pleading to 'save our language while there is still time' (Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, quoted in Wright, 2006, p. 49). Together with the growing equation of the institutional Francophonie with France, the close attention paid to the quotes and reports from language institutions such as the Académie Française or the Délégation Générale à la Langue Française et aux Langues de France[14] leads many scholars to the conclusion that a key way of understanding the French language is the world is through discourses of conquest and conflict (e.g. Laurens, 2004), and beliefs that 'le monde serait menacé de bout en bout par l'anglo-américain'[15] (Moatassine, 2004).

An example of "competition" between French and English would be media and academic coverage of the current linguistic situation in Rwanda, from constitutional reforms adding English to the list of official languages, to changing the medium of instruction in schools from French to English in 2008. This policy shift has often been understood as a retaliation against France for their support for previous President Habyalimana and their role in the genocide (see for instance Kayigema and Mutasa, 2014),

[14] General Delegation for the French language and the languages of France

[15] the entire world would be threatened by Anglo-American

with the nomination of Louise Mushikiwabo as Secretary-General of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie in late 2018 described in the media as an attempted rapprochement between France and Rwanda (France 24, 2018; Kagire, 2018). The idea of a global competition between French and English is magnified through the idea of foreign policy being played out through language reform, and equating French with France.

Although the presence of French speakers on all continents can be explained through similar political and economic processes as English (Wright, 2006, p. 37), language ideologies regarding authority, purity and values are used to justify perceptions of threat and the necessity of "defense", and therefore of the "special" qualities of French above other languages. Arguments such as simplicity, clarity or the promotion of values have also been used regarding English (cf. the beginning of this chapter), but have faded as the "spread" of English as a phenomenon is increasingly taken for granted, seen as obvious and inevitable. Especially developed in the wake of African independence and echoing Gaullist attempts to make France a "great power" through cultural "rayonnement", the F/francophonie is described as not only developing material capabilities but most importantly 'c'est un capital affectif, relationnel (…) c'est aussi un immense capital d'amitiés, de sympathies, de relations personnelles entre des gens de provenances géographiques très diverses'[16] (Laurens, 2004, p. 344, see also Majumdar, 2012). From a Francophonie perspective, the French language symbolises a "common culture" between France and its former colonies. Colonial appeals to the "civilising mission" of bringing Enlightenment values to the rest of the world through access to a "universal language" have morphed into French as the defense against uniformising globalisation as indexed by the English language. Relying on similar tropes to the discourses of English as a global language, French in the world and institutional Francophonie are described as 'un vecteur fédérateur entre diverses communautés ou cultures différentes'[17] (Sfeir, 2005, p. 11). Immediately the contrast is being drawn being the francophonie as a community of people 'sur la même longueur d'onde'[18] thanks to French being a 'langue de formation et de culture'[19] in addition to being a lingua franca, unlike English, which

> est devenue au fil des décennies un simple vecteur de communication. Il est vrai, l'anglais est porteur de ce mondialisme et de cette globalisation ; le français porte en lui, sans doute depuis la Révolution française, l'idée d'universel.[20] (Sfeir, 2005, p. 11)

Within all these discourses, users are often invisibilised and the notion of a language as vector of values forms a key part of the justification of this language of "threat" and "protection" in the name of a putative "universality" ascribed to French and its mythical links to the Enlightenment.

In fact, discourses around French as being both threatened by English and superior to it rest on myths of universal languages and purity mentioned previously as well as equating the English language with globalisation, neo-liberalism, Inner Circle countries (especially the UK and the US). In

[16] it's affective, relational capital (…) it's also an immense wealth of friendships, sympathies, personal relations between people of very different geographical provenances

[17] a unifying vector between diverse communities or different cultures

[18] on the same wave length

[19] a language of training and culture

[20] has become over the decades a simple vector of communication. It is true, English is the bearer of this globalism and globalisation; French carries with it, probably since the French Revolution, the idea of universality

some publications, English is labelled “anglo-américain”, “globish” or angloricain” (see for instance Nerrière, 2007; Tchitchi, 2004). All are meant to be pejorative terms denoting a monolithic language and its correlated set of values, threatening to standardise the world into one mode of thinking (Moatassine, 2004, p. 220). Using highly evocative negative terms thus allows this group of French academics and policy-makers to position French as ‘not anti-English, but simply resisting uniformity’ (Wright, 2006, p. 42). The reproduction of discourses of a totalising English language goes beyond nationalist authors, as highly polemical writers such as Nerriere are regularly quoted in academic research on French and English in the world. They are also found in the work of critical thinkers such as Confiant, who ground the promotion of diversalité within a defence against ‘Anglo-Saxon communautarism’ and English-speaking globalisation (Confiant, 2004, p. 251).

The focus on linguistic competition erases users and dissimulates the differences between policies and practices. As Wright notes, despite narratives of “France” being opposed to “English”, the realities of the ground show a much more complex expansion of people’s linguistic repertoire and inclusion of English as a medium of instruction and symbol of cultural capital (Wright, 2006, pp. 50–54). Moreover, this explanatory framework reproduces a colonial outlook where the speeches and actions of a handful of administrators in “mother countries” are necessary and sufficient to understand language dynamics in their former colonies. Conflict as an explanatory framework perpetuates simplistic views of language as purely a soft power tool in the hands of former colonial governments, with African agency negated or ignored, without questioning what “French” or “English” are, who/what is competing against who/what and what use pronouncements in Paris are in understanding linguistic repertoires and social worlds in Lubumbashi, Tamanrasset or Port-Louis.

1.3.3 Beyond “French”

The two previous sections discussed the main explanatory frameworks used to discuss French in the world, namely F/francophonie and the concept of conflict. The emphasis on the institutional Francophonie and French political pronouncements, as well as the focus on competition reveal some of the underlying prevailing language ideologies surrounding these topics. As mentioned before, discourses are not equivalent to practices, but discourses shape the understanding of practices even when the two diverge.

The focus on competition and conflict should also not obscure the fact that language ideologies of purity, authority and authenticity and the equation of language and culture is not specific to French and the francophonie, but the discourses of “French exceptionalism” are prevalent throughout academic research. The idea that French has inherently more rigid ideologies is reproduced in the scholarship on so-called global languages by placing more critical perspectives on English (such as World Englishes) in contrast to rigid conceptions of French emerging from the institutional Francophonie, as well as by French-writing authors within their own critical writings. For instance, Blanchet expands his critique of glottophobie in France by suggesting that the French language, wherever it is used in the world, is

inherently more rigid and closed: 'si je m'autorise cette boutade, je dirais que le français importé en Afrique l'a été avec la maladie congénitale qui s'attache à cette langue plus qu'à tout autre: l'insécurité n'épargne personne' (Prignitz 1994: 72, quoted in Blanchet, 2016, p. 96).

Despite 'casual generalisations' emphasising surface differences in language policies towards the standard between English and French (Woolard, 1998, p. 24), in reality there might be more similarities than differences between "French" and "English". Underlying language ideologies are similar, emphasising uniformity, purity and staticity (Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998), with societal multilingualism 'viewed with suspicion and discursively constructed as a threat to social cohesion' in both cases (Weber, 2015, p. 4), and states in fact drawing on competing ideological positions for policy-making (Woolard, 1998, p. 24). As Grillo suggests, 'there are indeed differences (…), but more in what is said than in what is done' (Grillo, 1989, p. 21).

In addition, while approaches such as créolité attempt the reclaiming or questioning of norms, as Provenzano points out, 'the paradigm of subalternity does nothing but apply the discourse of the institutional Francophonie to international academia' (2011, p. 242) by promoting a dehistoricised vision of "French" as a totality, politicising "creativity as the new norm" and emphasising an underlying conflict between imperialism (whether Anglo-American or Parisian) and liberation-through-diversity. Taking the same starting point as creolitics, authors from the field of French regional language studies have consistently questioned the underlying power relations and their effects on language practices. Beyond attempts at creating legitimacy for different varieties of French, authors such as Blanchet and Castellotti focus on the importance of practices in a similar way to Pennycook and Canagarajah's emphasis on linguistic repertoires. Norms and representations are important to take into account for the cultural capital and socio-political filter they bring to people (Blanchet, 2016, pp. 80–81), but language practices are social, heterogenous and continuous (Blanchet, 2016, p. 32). Without mentions of translanguaging, recent Francophone sociolinguistics, including in Algeria, has highlighted the practices of "passeurs", who create meaning through shifting words, registers, languages from one space to another (Achour-Kallel, 2015, p. 21), away from code-switching-based conceptions of multilinguals as 'caméléon[s], qui change[nt] d'écriture comme de chemise'[21] (Joubert, 2005, p. 149, after Khatibi). Rather than focusing on the equal legitimacy of different varieties in the political or literary sphere, this approach takes the education system as a key research and action ground by encouraging fluid and integrated plurilingual teaching (Asselah-Rahal & Blanchet, 2007; Chachou & Stambouli, 2016; Forlot, 2009a).

There are strong similarities between Blanchet's calls for reflective critical teaching (2016, pp. 87–89, 172) and García & Li Wei's notion of criticality, defined as the 'ability to use available evidence appropriately, systematically and insightfully to inform considered views of cultural, social, political and linguistic phenomena, to question and problematise received wisdom, and to express views adequately through reasoned responses to situations' (2014, p. 67). Even though the authors do not refer to each other across language traditions, Tupas' notion of unequal Englishes parallels Blanchet's conceptuali-

[21] chameleons, who change script as often as they change their shirts

sation of glottophobie, which extends to all instances of discrimination based on linguistic practices as well as how structural inequality is effected through language (Blanchet, 2016; Tupas, 2015). Although initially focused on politico-linguistic dynamics in France, this conceptual framework is useful in all contexts when investigating the interactions between discourses and practices, including policy and implementation but also group- and individual-level discourses and everyday practices. Taking into account both the glottophobie within F/francophonie and critical sociolinguistic research published in French, my research aims to go beyond narratives of a competition between "French" and "English" to better understand not only who is saying what and who is doing what, but also the social and political consequences of discourses and practices.

1.4 Languages in Algeria

There is nothing automatic about the way linguistic ideologies shape practices, but instead particular discourses around purism, essentialism or Euro-centrism must be problematised within their context to understand how they are integrated to linguistic repertoires and the conditions under which they are deployed to account for them (Woolard, 1998, p. 22). Language ideologies about language and social worlds influence and structure not just which discourses about English are heard, but also how they are read, appropriated and re-purposed in particular settings.

1.4.1 History, languages and identities in Algeria

The territory that is now Algeria was invaded by France in 1830, and decades of brutal conquest and government followed until the war of independence which lasted between 1954 and 1962. The duration of French rule and Algeria's special status within the French colonial empire means that the period is seen as a destructive break from the past and a key determinant of the contemporary situation. The territory had previously been an Ottoman province, but there are few scholarly accounts of the linguistic situation prior to colonisation. There is increasing historical linguistic research into Berber languages, from Kabylia to the Aurès and the Sahara, which have focused mostly on language as code (see for instance Souag, 2013; Touati, 2018). There is therefore little understanding of language practices and ideologies before 1830, with only sporadic colonial accounts until the 1880s.

After years of brutal conquest, the northernmost (and most populous) part of the territory was officially integrated into France as three départements (provinces) in 1848, while the Sahara remained under military rule until 1957. Existing education networks were dismantled as zaouiat[22] had their land seized and many were destroyed following insurrections against French occupation. Those who wished to continue teaching pupils were required to apply for a near-impossible to obtain and highly restrictive

[22]zaouiat, also spelt zawiyat in English, are religious schools or monasteries which can be found across North and West Africa, and many have been important centres of knowledge for centuries before colonisation. They are somewhat comparable to madrasas in the Middle East.

teaching licence (F. Colonna, 1975, pp. 29–34). Literacy rates plummeted to below 10% by 1962, due to a combination of resistance from Algerian families and the lack of interest from the French authorities in genuinely providing education to "Muslims"[23]. There were limited attempts by French officials to introduce Arabic teaching in schools from 1892, always under the heading of "foreign language", taught by French teachers, and focused on 'l'écriture et la lecture de l'arabe vulgaire'[24] (Kadri, 2014, p. 43). French authorities' strong opposition to what would now be termed Standard Arabic, and the resulting absence of the language and of any Islamic teaching in French schools meant that the colonial school system was viewed with extreme suspicion by the population, and often equated to apostasy and forgetting one's culture (F. Colonna, 1975, p. 28; Turin, 1971). French emphasis on "la langue vulgaire", at the expense of other varieties of Arabic seen as linked to Islam, provides another ground for late 19th century school reformers and Islamic scholars to foreground the Arabic language as a vector of cultural resistance and means to 'save the soul of the country' (F. Colonna, 1975, p. 34). Land despoliation and destructive education policies contributed to making Standard Arabic and religion prominent markers and foci of resistance.

Citizenship rules also served to reinforce the links between religious, linguistic, social and political identities, with religious, ethnic and cultural categories confused or used as equivalent to each other (Saada, 2012, p. 108). As I also discuss in Saraceni and Jacob (2019), naming and categorisation was a cornerstone of colonial control, with ethnic and religious labelling used asymmetrically to create and maintain an "Other" (Blévis, 2001, pp. 575–578), and the reproduction of these categories in academic discussions is inherently problematic. "Algériens" was claimed by European settlers to claim an identity as separate from that of the metropole. The term "pieds-noirs" is now widely used to refer to former settlers, but only emerged after Algerian independence and its use would be anachronistic before 1962. Today's "Algerians" were first called "indigènes", then "Arabs" or "Muslims", often interchangeably, with "Muslim Christians" used to label the small minority who had converted to Christianity. The Jewish population switched categories from "indigènes israélites" to "French" in 1870 (Evans, 2012; Graebner, 2006; Prochaska, 1988). Religion became a key marker of access to political rights, with the 1870 Crémieux Decree granting all Jews (apart from those living in the Sahara) French citizenship, and a 1889 law enabling the children of (Christian) European settlers to automatically acquire it, irrespective of their parents' country of origin and length of stay in Algeria (Blévis, 2001). Muslims were liable to taxes and conscription as French subjects, but becoming a French citizen required a lengthy administrative process including renouncing one's "personal status" (the right to have matters pertaining to family law and inheritance judged by Muslim courts) (Aissaoui, 2003, p. 194). Naturalisation was thus equated with negating one's religion and traditions (McDougall, 2017b, p. 151). While not the only locus of colonial cultural conflict (McDougall, 2017b, pp. 100–118), personal status came to represent both 'the site in which the colonial oppression of Algerian Muslims was organised and exercised' as well as a the symbol of a distinct Algerian culture (McDougall, 2006, p. 91).

For many of the opposition (later to become and/or be defined as "nationalist") movements which

[23] See discussion of this term in the following paragraph.

[24] the reading and writing of vulgar(vernacular) Arabic

emerged in the 1920s and 1930s, 'a unifying element was found in the religion and language that denied Algerians a place in French Algeria, namely Islam and Arabic' (Mouhleb 2005, quoted in Benrabah, 2013, p. 21). Narratives of a distinct Algerian identity were promoted through the production of detailed histories emphasising Algeria as a distinct nation, for instance by the Association of Algerian Ulema (Muslim Scholars, hereafter Ulema), founded in 1931 by Sheikh Abdelhamid Ben Badis. The frontispiece of one these works, Al-Madani's كتاب الجزائر (The Book of Algeria), included the inscription "Islam is our religion, Algeria is our homeland, Arabic is our language", which came to be interpreted as a summary of nationalist demands and remains an unofficial motto in contemporary Algeria. Aiming to become the exclusive authority on spiritual, moral and cultural matters (McDougall, 2006, p. 14), the Ulema focused on religious reforms as well as the need to revive Algeria's Muslim and Arab roots through the creation of schools to teach Arabic, as well as social and cultural organisations such as sports clubs, theatres, scouts groups and newspapers (Evans, 2013, pp. 52–54). Other political parties which later come to be seen as crucial in the struggle for independence, such as the Etoile Nord Africaine (North African Star) headed by Messali Hadj, construct a national identity based on "Islam-ness" and "Arab-ness", with both markers strongly linked to the Arabic language and linguistic demands a key part of all parties' manifestos (Benrabah, 2013, pp. 42–46).

Arabic and Islam have always played a key role in Algeria's place as a crossroads of intellectual life in North and West Africa and the Middle East (Bennoune, 1988, p. 20; Scheele, 2010, p. 294). Understandings of "Arab-ness" and "Islam-ness" as not only constitutive of a non-colonial identity but also as markers of an independent nation reflects re-constructions of the past with European conceptions of "nation-states" as the main unit of political organisation. Both concepts also ensue from colonial divide-and-rule policies that opposed Kabyles (Berbers from Kabylia, a region near Algiers) against Arabs (Aissaoui, 2003, p. 188; A. Taleb Ibrahimi, 2008, p. 36; Temlali, 2015), emphasising a notion of identity as unitary and distinct. This notion of identity also influenced how language was conceptualised (also as discrete and monolithic) and how it played the role of both key political demand and defining trait of a reclaimed "Algerian personality[25]".

Arabisation and Algerianisation remained key concepts of nation- and state-building after independence. The vast majority of the early politicians and civil servants were French-education or bilingual, and locating Arabic as the language of politics, administration and education thus became 'a matter of cultural decolonisation and social equity' (Berger, 2002, p. 2). Arabic was defined as 'the very expression of our country's values' in the 1962 Tripoli programme and the 1964 Algiers Charter (quoted in (A. Taleb Ibrahimi, 2008, p. 44)). As Benrabah (2013, p. 58) argues, 'the core of Algerian nationalism was Arabic: the language question stood high on the agenda of the national movement and drew its strength from its status as a bond between Islam and nationalism'. Arabising the school system, from curriculum content and teaching staff to the medium of instruction, was paramount in 'retrouver nos sources, notre culture originelle à travers notre langue nationale[26]' (A. Taleb Ibrahimi, 2008, p. 42),

[25] the most common term used during the 20th century to denote an Algerian collective identity

[26] recover our roots, our original culture, through our national language

'devenue synonyme de défense des valeurs "nationales"[27]' (Cheriet, 1983, p. 9) and 'seule possibilité de remédier aux effets de la colonisation culturelle[28]' (K. Taleb Ibrahimi, 1997, p. 47). Language and education reforms reproduced nationalist discourses of a single homogeneous cultural community embodying "the nation" (Benmayouf, 2009, p. 117; McAllister, 2017, p. 50; Roberts, 2003). A timeline of language policies can be found in Appendix A. As discussed later, the discursive emphasis on a singular "Arabisation" and mutually exclusive languages erases the complex realities of the proponents and tenets of both policies and practices.

The 1980s saw a a series of social, economic and political upheavals, including the 1980 Berber Spring[29], 1984 Code de la Famille[30], and an economic crisis precipitated by a drop in oil prices (oil and gas represent 98% of the Algerian economy). Youth protests (and the initial brutal repression of the "riots" by the state) in the autumn of 1988 precipitated constitutional reforms leading to multipartism and increased freedom of the press and freedom of a assembly (Aït-Aoudia, 2015; Rahal, 2017). The cancellation of the second round of the parliamentary elections in January 1992, which the Front Islamique du Salut (Islamic Salvation Front - FIS) was poised to win, intensified protests and triggered spirals of violence throughout the 1990s, which would come to be called the "dark decade". The fact that the 1988 protests coincided with the first cohorts to have completed their entire schooling in Arabic led certain French-speaking observers to draw a link between language and socio-political issues, describing the 1990s as an "identity war" which supposedly pitted conservative, devout "Arabophones" against secular "Francophones" (with Berberophones considered part of this group) (Lardjane, 1997; Madi, 1997), and equating "Islamists" with "Arabophones". Within this context, a 1992 pilot reform, which gave parents the choice between French and English as the first foreign language to be taught in the second year of primary schools, has been understood as a way of reducing the importance of French and therefore as a gesture towards "Islamists". Initial take-up was low, with over 70% of parents choosing French, and the policy was abandoned in 1994 (see for instance Ounis, 2012). Nonetheless, the 1992-1994 reforms and the reasons for its short lifespan continue to provide a lighting rod for political discussions through language, as further explored in chapter 4.

The current situation regarding linguistic status and acquisition also finds its roots in the set of political reforms started by Abdelaziz Bouteflika upon his election to the presidency in 1999, towards the end of the dark decade. Bouteflika was noted for his willingness to use several languages in official speeches, adopting 'bilingual fluency in Arabic and French to project a role model for the bilingual

[27] having become synonymous with the defence of "national" values

[28] the only possibility of countering the effects of cultural colonisation

[29] The Printemps berbère (Tafsut Imazighen) refers to a series of protests and strikes, mostly taking place in Kabylia and Algiers between March and September. It was sparked by the cancellation of a conference by writer Mouloud Mammeri on ancient Kabyle poetry at the University of Tizi-Ouzou, and demands coalesced around the recognition of Tamazight and Amazigh (Berber) identity in Algeria. It is considered the first large-scale popular opposition movement since independence. A series of protests on the same issues between April and June 2011, sparked by the death of a student in custody, is known as the Printemps noir (Tafsut taberkant, Black Spring), in reference to the 1980 Printemps berbère.

[30] The controversial new set of family laws was condemned by many women as backwards compared to previous legislation, as it 'institutionalised gender inequality' (Vince, 2015, p. 197). It is seen as a sign of an increasingly conservative polical climate (Vince, 2015, p. 197) and 'a major concession to Islamist sentiment' (Roberts, 2003, p. 22)

Algerian citizens' (Benrabah, 2013, p. 75), and was seen as de-escalating tensions regarding the use of "foreign languages" by claiming that 'pour défendre mon pays, j'utiliserais l'anglais, le chinois et même l'hébreu'[31] (quoted in Chachou, 2013, p. 28). Nonetheless, the 2003 education reforms, reinforced by a series of laws and decrees in 2008, proclaimed the primary goal of compulsory schooling as 'l'affirmation de la personnalité algérienne et de la consolidation de l'unité de la nation'[32] through 'la promotion et la préservation des valeurs en rapport avec l'Islamité, l'Arabité et l'Amazighité en tant que trame historique de l'évolution démographique, culturelle, religieuse et linguistique de notre société'[33] (Ministère de l'Education Nationale, 2008, pp. 8–9). While ministers deliver their speeches in both Arabic and French, education legislation continued to emphasise the paramount importance of the Arabic language for its symbolic and political meaning, with Tamazight given symbolic recognition and all other languages considered foreign. For Benrabah (2013, p. 159), this strategy 'renewed the old practice of manipulating the language issue to deflect challenges to elites' positions from below'. Arabic and "Arabic-ness" remain central to political discourse and retain their potent symbolic value at the national level.

1.4.2 Identity, conflict and proxies

With "Arabic", "French" and "Berber" conceptualised as mutually exclusive and culturally-charged bounded systems, languages remain potent symbols for discussing broader social and political questions into the contemporary period. The importance of language in expressing social identity and language becoming a proxy for competing expressions of socio-cultural belonging are obviously not specific to Algeria (Joseph, 2006, Weber, 2015, pp. 51–55). Identity can be understood as a joint process of self-construction and construction by others based on the selection of some cultural features as emblematic while other markers are ignored (Bailey, 2007, p. 258, building on Barth 1969 and Bourdieu 1969). In the Algerian context, language is highlighted as a crucial marker, and the neat delineations between "arabisants" and "francisants" is taken as 'un fait évident'[34] (Madi, 1997, p. 11) and 'comme allant de soi'[35] (Haddab, 1997, p. 25). Standard Arabic comes to index simultaneously an "authentic" Arabo-Muslim identity and an antiquated set of practices, Berber languages refer at the same time to undermining national unity through separatist claims and a "true" Algerian identity (as the inhabitants of North Africa prior to the Arab conquests), and French associated in turns with colonisation and modernity (Atmane, 2013; Benbachir, 2012; Benrabah, 2007b; Benstead & Reif, 2013; Berger, 1998; Euromonitor International, 2012; Mostari, 2004; Temim, 2007). In short, 'on a presque envie de dire "dis-moi quelle(s) langue(s) tu parles, je te dirai qui tu es"'[36] (Benmayouf, 2009, p. 15), with the language choice for each utterance supposedly disclosing one's identity (Berger, 2002, p. 9). In terms of

[31] to defend my country, I would use English, Chinese and even Hebrew

[32] The affirmations of the Algerian personality and the promotion and consolidation of national unity

[33] the promotion and preservation of values linked to Islamité, Arabité and Amazighité as the historical frame of our society's demographic, cultural, religious and linguistic evolution

[34] an obvious fact

[35] as self-evident

[36] We almost want to say 'tell me which language(s) you speak, I will tell you who you are'

both state discourse and dominant language ideologies, the label attached to a speech act would seem to take precedence over the content being communicated.

Studies of Algerian society and politics 'sometimes reduced Algerian culture to being merely the expression - or, worse, itself a cause - of the conflict and violence that have so marked the country's contemporary history' (McDougall, 2017a, p. 236), reflecting a sence that in many colonial and post-colonial contexts culture 'has often been the central means of waging "war", in this broad sense of underlying socio-political struggle that sometimes eventuates in armed conflict, between competing groups and interests within society, and between society and the state' (McDougall, 2017a, p. 236). While the distinction between arabisants and francisants is too simplistic and homogeneising to be used as a valuable explanatory framework (Haddab, 1997, p. 25), these categories represent a useful space and medium through which other political and cultural issues can be debated, especially during the 1970s, and as tensions around access to resources and ideological debates regarding key social policies intensify in the economic crises of the 1980s (McDougall, 2017a, pp. 238–243). As Khaoula Taleb Ibrahimi (1997, p. 58) highlights, 'il devient évident que le discours sur la langue (avec les attitudes et représentations qu'il dénote) sert de prétexte aux élites intellectuelles algériennes pour se situer par rapport au pouvoir et à la classe dominante'[37]. The distinction between French-speakers and Arabic-speakers is important not in defining their linguistic practices but in situating oneself in the political landscape. Discourses of these supposedly competing identity discourses between Francophones, Arabophones and Berberophones, Islamists and secularits, traditionalists and modernists, constitute a common shared performance of Algerian-ness (Benkhaled & Vince, 2017; Vince, 2015). While prevailing language ideologies might emphasise conflict and mutually exclusive socio-politico-linguistic identities, they also represent a shared code understood by everyone and thereby (somewhat counter-intuitively) are instrumental in creating a shared social and political space.

1.4.3 Discourses and practices

Daily practices demonstrate that discourses around the politicisation of languages are only one aspect of languages in Algeria. While much research continues to be plagued by descriptions of features, statuses and uses as 'written, congealed, with nothing in common with real practices' (Calvet 2007, p. 72, quoted in Kara-Abbes et al., 2013, p. 177), there is an increasing number of studies on practices being published over the last two decades. Research focusing on Arabic refutes diglossic theories with strictly delineated high (formal) and low (informal) varities, whether on radio and TV programmes, advertising, official conferences, religious sermons or political speeches, suggesting blurred boundaries instead (Chachou, 2013; Sebaa, 1996; K. Taleb Ibrahimi, 1995). Most people are multilinguals, and therefore looking at categories such as "Arabophone", "Francophone" and "Berberophone", which are often used as shorthands to denote supposed irreconciable groups within Algerian society (Benkhaled & Vince, 2017; K. Taleb Ibrahimi, 1995), leads to 'performative paradoxes' (Berger, 2002, p. 3). As

[37] it becomes obvious that discourses about language (with the attitudes and representations that they index) are used as a pretext by intellectual elites to situate themselves in relation to power and the dominant classes

Dourari remarks, 'il est bien rare de trouver un Algérien monolingue stricto sensu'[38] (2003, p. 17). Advocates of Arabisation promoted and defended the series of policies using the French language, (Berger, 2002, p. 28), and its main architect, Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi[39] preferred to hire "bilinguals" for his ministries (A. Taleb Ibrahimi, 2008). The authors and composers of the national anthem were Berbers who had been schooled in both French and Arabic (Benrabah, 2013, p. 130) and the Academy of Arabic Language was promoted, implemented and supervised by a Kabyle (Berber) (Berger, 2002, pp. 3, 4). Labels such as "Arabophone", "Berberophone" or "Francophone" not only offer a very partial description of linguistic repertoires and daily practices but also imply that these languages are mutually exclusive.

In fact, daily practices can be described more accurately as translanguaging, with Algerian Arabic itself an expression of people's full linguistic repertoire, beyond distinctions of Arabic, Berber, French and English. Although people are keenly aware of the symbolic values attached to each bounded language, hybridity and translanguaging are the un-standardised standard, from online language use to advertising, song lyrics and children's names (Asselah-Rahal and Méfidène, 2007; Benmayouf, 2008, pp. 72–74; Benrabah, 2015; Chachou, 2013; Cherrad, 2016, pp. 84–87; Davies and Bentahila, 2006; Daoudi, 2011, p. 162). Current research into the education system has also emphasised the prevalence of translanguaging practices in the classroom (albeit not using this specific conceptual framework) (Asselah-Rahal & Blanchet, 2007; Chachou & Stambouli, 2016), including in the possibilities of using translingual marketing campaigns as teaching materials (Benhouhou, 2016).

Even though many works have challenged the relevance of the diglossia framework (most notably K. Taleb Ibrahimi, 1995), this lens still predominates in discussions of language practices. Languages as bounded entities relating to a "pure" standard are given pre-eminence in terms of prestige and validity, to the extent that mutilingualism and translanguaging practices on the ground are still often understood in pejorative terms compared to the "real language" that is Arabic (Benmayouf, 2008, p. 14). Even though Algerian Arabic is used in nearly all situations and contexts, from schools and streets to courts and TV, near-systematically negative institutional discourses reduce it to a 'langue bâtarde, vulgaire, mélangée, faible, contaminée, frustrée, incorrecte[40]' (Chachou, 2013, p. 54). The term derja (also darja and darija), which is used by Algerians to describe the language they speak every day, can be translated as "spoken" but is often rendered by people as "slang". As Suleiman (2013, p. 266) argues, 'socially available conceptualisations of the language', including the labels users attach to practices, should also be taken into account in understanding the validity of conceptual frameworks. Even though language users' practices might not correspond to pre-established categories, it is those same practices, stances and discourses which are read and re-constituted through the language ideologies attached to these categories in particular contexts (Walters, 2011, p. 104). The contradictions between discourses and practices, or within a single individual's discourses, can thus be understood as a reflection of different

[38] it is very rare to find an Algerian who could be qualified as monolingual in the strict sense

[39] Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi was a key figure in the Algerian nation- and state-building process. He was Minister of Education between 1965 and 1970 before becoming Minister of Culture until 1977, Presidential Advisor between 1977 and 1982, and Foreign Minister until 1988

[40] bastardised, vulgar, mixed, weak, contaminated, frustrated, incorrect language

embodied roles and activities rather than between separate and irreconciliable parts of their identities (Irvine & Gal, 2000, pp. 37–39), although the vocabulary of psychological trauma and "split personality" due to bilingualism remains prevalent (Dahou, 2016; Gaouaou, 2002; Houache, 2015; Tageldin, 2009, amongst others). While the creativity and dynamism of Algerian translanguaging can be celebrated, this is not how people understand their own practices. Younger people are often labelled "bilingual illiterates" by older generations, who berate the translanguaging nature of their communication and equate it to a lack of "mastery" of standardised codes (Benrabah, 2007b, pp. 226–228; Dahou, 2016; Houache, 2015). Conceptions of bilingualism as semi-lingualism, emphasising supposed "deficits" in learning, language skills and overall intelligence (cf. Li, 2007, pp. 16–18) remain a common "folk linguistics" frame of understanding. Elite closure is still effected through the mandatory "mastery" of particular standard languages, which endow speakers (and writers) with higher economic and cultural capital and access to jobs and opportunities (Benazzouz, 2013; Cheriguen, 2007).

While translanguaging represents a very real and integral part of routine language practices in Algeria, language ideologies of named languages and the networks of social, historical and political symbols they come to index continue to shape the complex and shifting ways in which people define their identities.

1.4.4 English in Algeria

Although the last ten years have seen the emergence of works within Algerian sociolinguistics which have been critical of how concepts such as diglossia and language conflict are applied unreflexively to the Algerian context and described as ontological givens rather than socio-historical constructions (Asselah-Rahal & Blanchet, 2007; Chachou, 2013; R. Colonna et al., 2013), the questions they pose have not been applied to the place of English. Publications specifically focusing on English have been concerned with broad overviews of policy changes or students' language attitudes, while wider studies on languages in Algeria might include a small section on English in advertising (Chachou, 2013, pp. 202–210) or in the education system (Asselah-Rahal & Blanchet, 2007). Up to the 2000s it was nearly exclusively mentioned in passing, as an afterthought to the main "conflict" between Francophones and Arabophones, or immediately politicised as "against French"[41]. Apart from Hayane's 1989 monograph on the history of English language teaching in Algeria, there have been no large-scale study of what is happening, how, where, by whom and why.

English is systematically presented in opposition to French, thereby immediately politicising its discursive use and promotion. The comparison works on several levels, and is magnified by the inclusion of historical, political and social elements combining global and national discourses. Observers

[41] See for instance K. Taleb Ibrahimi (1995, p. 53) 'et même parfois de l'anglais' (and even sometimes some English). Werenfels, as part of her study of Algerian elites and political change, also mentions that the MSP's (Mouvement de la Société pour la Paix, حركة مجتمع السلم - Movement of Society for Peace - previously the Mouvement de la Société Islamique, حركة مجتمع الإسلامي - Movement for the Islamic Society, also known by its Arabic accronym as Hamas) preference for English is because of their business interests rather than (just) ideological opposition to French (2007, pp. 52–53)

who specifically look at the place of English in Algeria often take for granted that this language is in competition with French (Abid-Houcine, 2007; Benrabah, 2009, 2013, 2014; Lefèvre, 2015; Ounis, 2012), stemming from wider discourses of linguistic conflict, including the Francophonie 'battling' against English (Laurens, 2004; Moatassine, 2004). As discussed earlier in this chapter, conflict is a prominent lens in understanding not only Algerian society but also postcolonial linguistic situations across the world, and it is not surprising to find both academic research and media commentaries emphasising the competition angle when describing the place of English in Algeria.

Presenting English as 'a language without connotations of domination, without a political past and [...] a convenient way of getting the job done' (Ager 2001:21, quoted in Benrabah, 2013, p. 87; see also Abid-Houcine, 2007, p. 150) lays the foundations for analyses of the contemporary Algerian sociolinguistic situation as a battleground where English is used as a proxy by proponents of Standard Arabic to reduce the importance of French. For Benrabah (2013, p. 91), 'the rivalry between French and English became fierce in the 1990s, in parallel with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the country', and English is occasionally labelled as 'the language of the Islamists' by French speakers in Algeria. Dourari (2003, p. 9) offers a critical account of how the promotion of English instead of French as the "language of science and modernity" is associated with a sense of "protecting Standard Arabic" and with competition between elites defined as "French-speaking" or "Arabic-speaking":

> le conflit linguistique (...) se manifeste sous la forme d'une lutte sourde, parfois très tumultueuse, entre arabisants et francisants à tous les niveaux de la hiérarchie sociale et administrative. Sous l'apparence d'une guerre linguistique se profile une lutte des élites pour sauvegarder ou améliorer leur statut dans l'administration et pour le contrôle du pouvoir. Ainsi, face à l'attitude des francisants qui disent défendre le français en tant que langue d'ouverture sur l'universalité, langue de science et de technologie ; les arabisants répondent par la promotion de la langue anglaise qui aurait non seulement ces mêmes qualités mais possèderait, en plus, le statut d'une langue internationale que même les Français sont contraints d'utiliser pour percer dans le domaine scientifique. (...) la revendication de la langue anglaise comme langue de science et de technologie, du fait que celle-ci n'est pas répandue dans la société, permettra à la langue arabe scolaire de bien s'installer socialement en éliminant un concurrent considéré comme dangereux : le français. Substitution des élites arabisantes aux élites francisantes ? Ou bien maintien des élites francisantes dans une strate sociale plus élevée que celles des élites arabisantes ?[42]

Discourses about English are appropriated within existing frameworks of languages as proxies for

[42]The linguistic conflict (...) manifests itself as a relentless, sometimes tumultuous struggle between Arabisants and Francisants at all levels of the social and administrative hierarchy. Under the guise of a language war, elites struggle to safeguard or improve their status in administration, and to control the levers of power. Thus, in the face of the Francisants who say they defend French as a language open to universality, a language of science and technology; the Arabisants respond by promoting the English language, which would not only have these same qualities but would also possess the status of an international language that even the French are forced to use to break into the scientific field. (...) Claims of English as a language of science and technology, because it is not widespread in society, will allow Standard Arabic to comfort its social importance by eliminating a competitor considered dangerous: French. Are the Arabic-speaking elites replacing the French-speaking elites? Or are the latter maintaining themselves in a higher social stratum than the former?

identities and political values, equating Modern Standard Arabic with religion and French with the liberal elite, within a framework of conflict and competition. "English" is weaponised by elites vying for political, economic and social capital, but which groups are using this to their advantage is not as straightforward as the competition presented by the prevalent discourses.

Talking about "English" is also used as a discursive tool to broach linguistic, economic and political decisions. Promoting the learning and using of English is constructed as a symbol of resistance to a 'Jacobine vision of language planning' (Chachou, 2013, p. 80) inherited from French colonialism. As Bruthiaux already noted in his 2002 article, 'throughout the 1990s and increasingly today, development efforts have become inextricably linked in governmental and academic circles as well as in the media with English language education' (2002, p. 289). The global discourses of the "empowering" and "developmental" effects of English (cf. Gargesh, 2006, p. 108; Seargeant, 2012, pp. 108–111) are reproduced by academics, politicians and consultancies when discussing the Algerian context. A majority of research into the Algerian semiotic landscape concludes by associating multilingualism with political pluralism and democratisation (e.g. Benrabah, 2013; Mostari, 2004; Tabory and Tabory, 1987; K. Taleb Ibrahimi, 2006). In the same way, English is repeatedly connected to economic liberalisation, with the slow penetration of the language compared to other parts of the world attributed to a directed economy (Benrabah, 2013, p. 121; EF Education First, 2015, Euromonitor International, 2012, p. 79). Embracing both the English language and globalisation would support a virtuous circle for language learning and economic growth (Benstead and Reif, 2013, pp. 101–102; Davies and Bentahila, 2006, pp. 385–387; Euromonitor International, 2012, p. 89).

Conflict and competition are presented as the main lenses through which contemporary language dynamics can be understood. In this sense, there is a fractal recursivity of discourses of conflict, with wider discourses of competition between the francophonie and English in the world, or between the two ex-colonial powers, being applied to the Algerian context. Academic discourses foregrounding the conflict lens also (re)produce rather than challenge existing hegemonic language ideologies, which 'generate particular understandings of language and particular ways of orienting towards language' (Pennycook, 2010, p. 103). Even though some of the existing research (such as the works mentioned above) reflects trends in the broader field of multilingualism and education, where research in the last fifteen years have attempted to look into 'situated processes' and how discourses are reproduced and renegotiated in everyday life (Baker, 2003, pp. 103–104), such studies of actual language use as opposed to discourses about languages remain relatively few. It has repeatedly led to a gap between findings pointing to additive multilingualism and apparent daily mixing of languages, and overarching discourses of hierarchy and competition. For example Benrabah's comprehensive historical survey of linguistic policies in Algeria focuses on symbolic and political clashes and rivalries, despite his acknowledgment that his fieldwork shows hybridity, mixity and a refusal of subtractive multilingualism, with English being promoted and used alongside Algerian Arabic and French, not in opposition to (2013, pp. 97, 100, 114, 123). The instrumentalisation of languages is decried by authors, but replicated in their explanatory framework.

One of the main limitations of existing research is not only the idea of conflict as an ontological given, but also the lack of methodological diversity. Some articles explain "Algerians' attitudes to languages" without explicitly referring to any data (e.g. Houache, 2015; Tabory and Tabory, 1987; K. Taleb Ibrahimi, 2006) or use surveys published more than a decade earlier (Benstead & Reif, 2013; Sebaa, 2015). Most research is based on questionnaires, some complemented by semi-structured interviews, mainly administered in schools and universities (see for example Atmane, 2014; Belhandouz, 2011; Benrabah, 2007a). These provide valuable information about language attitudes and linguistic confidence by using respondents' choice of language in a multilingual survey, or correlation with other socio-cultural items such as self reported religiosity or interest for American culture. Nonetheless, they tell us very little about actual use of languages beyond students' responses when prompted to make a choice between limited options. Surveys and semi-structured interviews do not allow for language to be considered as both practice and ideology, in the sense of being both 'communicative practices in which we get organised in society in everyday life' and 'indexes of the norms, attitudes, judgements, etc. which govern collective and individual sociolinguistic comportments' (Sabaté-Dalmau, 2018, p. 3, after Schieffelin, Woolard & Kroskrity 1998).

A few studies on language use in certain contexts (and therefore not on English per se) attempt to look at other aspects of the linguistic context, which by defininition includes fashion, adverts, shop signs and also 'electronic space, global travel, media awareness and usage, popular culture, as well as the virtual space of the internet' (Bolton, 2012, p. 30). Davies & Bentahila's studies of rai and hip-hop lyrics (2006, 2008), Daoudi's investigation of eArabic (2011), Mostari's research into texting (2009), Sadi's case study of a radio programme (2010), Lanseur's analysis of mobile networks' advertising campaigns (2010) and Ouaras' work on graffiti (2009, 2018) are examples of explorations of the wider "semiotic landscape(s)" (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010), including the occasional use of English. While these would complement the quantitative findings mentioned earlier, they are not discussed in conjunction with each other and are mostly ignored in the wider meta-discourses in academia or the media. Beyond impressions of "change", there is little data available on what is actually happening on the ground, what "English" is, where it is used, who learns it and for what purposes, and how people are making sense of their practices and those of others.

Frameworks such as English as a Lingua Franca have not been applied to the Algerian case. The idea that individuals learn a lingua franca as a way to improve their current socioeconomic status, in the belief that adding the language to their repertoire will have beneficial effects (Myers-Scotton, 1982, p. 85) needs to be explored in a context where English is not the national or even regional lingua franca, and other languages already play this role. To what extent is English embraced as a lingua franca, and how do global discourses around its role as an international language impact on local dynamics? Are the discourses around English more prominent, or are practices (including those linked to the "need" for a lingua franca) being relocalised into English?

1.5 Conclusion

Existing scholarship on how to understand the sociolinguistics of English in the world goes beyond ideas of "spread", circles and appropriation to encompass relocalisation, hybridity, inequality and Euro-centrism. The World Englishes framework and its three circles have been used to understand the spread of English through colonisation, extended by English as a Lingua Franca's focus on the Expanding Circle of countries where English was not the colonial language. Both frameworks sought to reclaim the diversity and legitimacy of Englishes outside its colonial centres, as well as study the dynamics of interactions between multilingual speakers. Although these approaches and the notion of "spread of English" remain extremely influential, concepts such as relocalisation, translanguaging and unequal Englishes help bring to the fore users of English themselves, and how they operate within existing and inherited structures of power. They highlight the coloniality of many of the language ideologies which underpin the spread metaphor, including in the perceived need for both a language standard and a standard language.

Because Algeria is often classified as "French-speaking", despite the coloniality of this framework and its lack of relevance to understanding practices on the ground (why should it not be part of "Arabic-speaking Africa" instead?), my research also extends and questions existing research into the forms and roles of French in the world. Academic and popular discourses which examine the F/francophonie through the lens of conflict and competition are being reproduced in the Algerian context, including the myths of French exceptionalism. More critical approaches, emphasising concepts such as passeurs, glottophobie, and reflective critical teaching, parallel perspectives found in the literature published in English, but are not used in research on English in Algeria. Instead, concepts such as diglossia and language replacement predominate, failing to account for the apparent gap between practices of translanguaging and discourses of trauma, bilingual illiterates and elite closure. Unlike the literature on French in Algeria, scholarship on English in Algeria has mostly focused on discourses through surveys rather than language use. My work thus focuses not just on understanding how speech forms comes to index certain identities but also how discourses about language come to mediate shifting perceptions of individual and groups identities, and how these conceptualisations grow from, reshape and maintain different social worlds. It also suggests new avenues of research beyond existing frames of understanding, which all too often remain stuck in a Euro-centric post-imperial competition between "English" and "French".

Chapter 2

Methodology

2.1 Introduction

When I started this research in 2015 commentators from academics to diplomats and journalists were describing the language situation in Algeria as shifting rapidly, but little research had been conducted on how these changes might be articulated with or through English. I wanted to focus on language as a local practice, in other words as 'bundles of activities that are organised into coherent ways of doing things' that 'mediate between social structure and individuated action' (Pennycook, 2010, pp. 22, 29). I was therefore interested in how "English" is relocalised, explained and "sedimented" locally, not in the sense of explaining how English has somehow "spread", but rather how 'local practices have been relocalised in English' (Pennycook, 2010, p. 73). My doctoral project aimed to examine the interplay between "English" and social worlds in a setting where another European language was the colonial language by building on the following research questions:

- What are the prevalent discourses around English in Algeria?
- Who learns and uses English and what do they do with it?
- How is English visible in the semiotic landscape?

In order to investigate both discourses and practices and how they are produced, reproduced and challenged, I chose to follow an ethnographic approach. I conducted eleven months of fieldwork, which included participant observation, unstructured interviews, analysis of the semiotic landscape as well as analysis of discourses. Algiers was the main site of my study, complemented by research based on similar methods at three other sites around the country: Ouargla (South), El Oued (South-East) and Tlemcen (West) (see map in Figure 2.1). The locations stemmed from opportunities I was given to conduct research there, and were chosen to offer a range of geographical locations with different socio-economic profiles (more below).

A higher education institution was often the starting site of investigation, where I conducted par-

Figure 2.1: Map of Algeria with field sites starred (source: Google Maps)

ticipant observation and interviews. Observations and interviews conducted in one site subsequently and iteratively led to other sites (such as student organisations or career centres) as well as other language users (primary school teachers, recruiters, translators, staff from national companies and multinationals). I also presented my methodology and preliminary conclusions to participants, with these presentations representing additional opportunities for participant observation and group interviews, as well as ongoing reflection on my practice. A discussion of my methodological framework, methods and challenges is developed in the remainder of this chapter.

2.2 Locations and participants

2.2.1 Locations

The table in Figure 2.2 clarifies where I collected my data. As I encountered most participants several times and in different spaces, and based my research on 'hanging out' (Geertz, 1998), a strict participants' count is impossible to draw up, and the table therefore focuses on spaces: it was participants' engagement with and movement through these spaces which meant that they became "participants" rather than bystanders in my wider life as a young researcher living in Algeria.

The Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS) in Algiers (Figure 2.3) is one of twelve teacher training col-

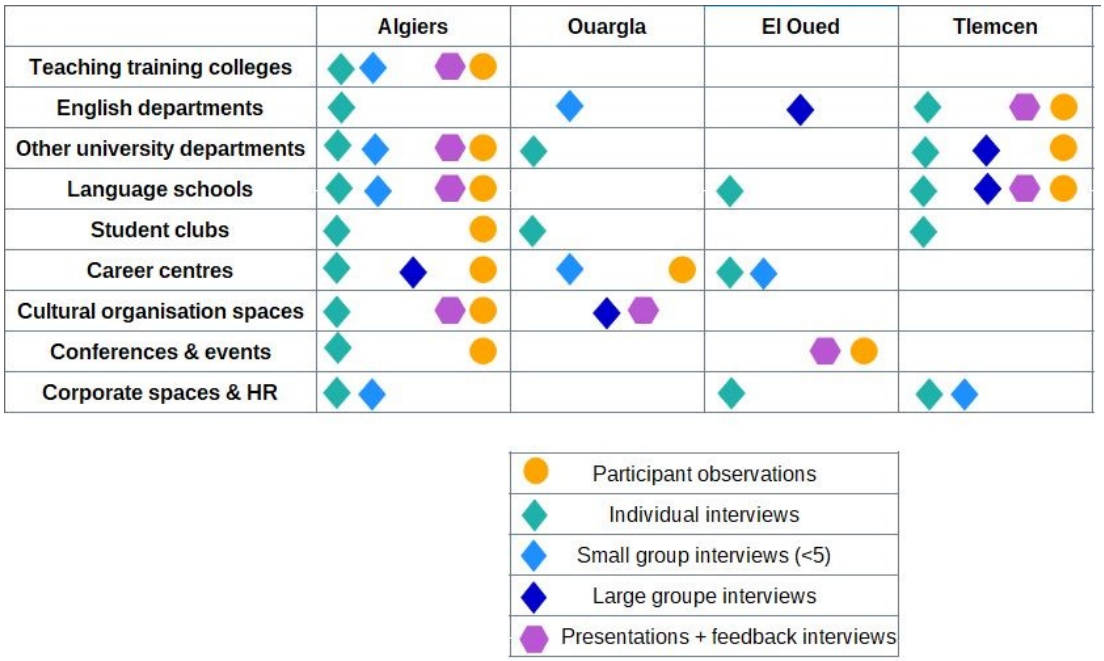

Figure 2.2: Research sites

leges in Algeria, and was the main starting site of my ethnographic study. This location was selected because it is both accessible to an external researcher and participants there were likely to use at least some English in everyday life. This location represented an opportunity to gain access to a wider range of age groups, from 18-25 year old students to young professors and those who were nearing retirement, as well as indirect access to secondary school pupils during trainees' work experience. Young people are also part of a demographic group who are regular internet and social media users, two domains which have been linked with changing usage of "English" (Euromonitor International, 2012; Gonzalez-Quijano, 2012; Miller et al., 2015). The ENS was preferred to a university as students are drawn from all over the country, they have not all chosen this discipline (as places are allocated based on baccalaureate results as well as individual preferences) and as trainee teachers it is their practices and representations which will shape the next generation of English users in schools. As explained in chapter 3, while students from the ENS might be more geographically representative of the general Algerian population than students of a single university[1], they still remain a small cross-section. The fact that the vast majority of trainee teachers are young women enabled access to the often-overlooked female half of the population, and was counter-balanced with the gender balance in other spaces.

As shown in the networks map (Figure 2.4), I used contacts with the British Council and the ENS as well as my supervisor's network to gain initial access to language schools, British and American cultural organisations, secondary school teachers attending an English Language Teaching conference, as well as staff working for multinationals and state companies. An iterative and exploratory method was privileged in order to better understand what was defined as "English", who learnt and used "English" and how discourses and practices intersected with existing social worlds, as this had not been

[1]Apart from the handful of elite higher education institutions (such as the Ecole Polytechnique, Sciences Po and the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, all modelled on the French "Grandes Ecoles"), students have to attend their local universities.

Figure 2.3: The historical buildings of the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Algiers-Bouzaréah

attempted before and hence no comprehensive data existed (cf. chapter 3). The multiple sources of data, with findings which in turn confronted, completed or comforted ongoing analyses, enabled me to draw a complex picture of the place of English in Algeria. Observations in secondary schools had originally been planned but due to the difficulty of obtaining authorisations this proved impossible within the time frame of my PhD.

With the view to create a collaborative approach to the research rather than a series of extractive relationships between interviewer and "informants" (Oakley, 1981), I sought to give participants as much control over their data as possible. Participants in observations were able to withdraw and their future contributions to the classes were not recorded. In practice, only three students initially asked for their contributions not to be recorded, and no participant withdrew. Participants in interviews were given full transcripts or recordings and were able to withdraw or comment on any or all of the information given. I also used presentations of my findings to my participants at the ENS as well as to other groups I was working with over several weeks, such as the American Cultural Centre or Algiers Science University, both as means to reconfirm consent and to give them more ownership over the content and direction of the research. Although 'quotations are always staged by the quoter' (Clifford, quoted in Sanjek, 1990, p. 407), as much as possible I shared with participants their quotations in context as well as short summaries of the articles or chapters they appeared in, in an effort to facilitate their engagement with the research. Nonetheless, 'control is still asymmetrical' (Sanjek, 1990, p. 407), and most participants simply acquiesced to how I had chosen to write the data. Following Yarimar Bonilla (2015), I sought to present participants' voices in a dialogue with each other and with me throughout this thesis.

Algiers was chosen as the main case study as metropolises tend to be at the forefront of linguistic change, as well as bringing together individuals from different geographical and social backgrounds. Cities are key sites of mobility and exchanges, with people both moving to the capital for work or studies but also travelling back to their extended family during national or religious holidays, maintaining thick networks of connections with the rest of the country. As key sites of globalisation and diversity (cultural, linguistic, economic, political…), cities offer an important case study of "new" language

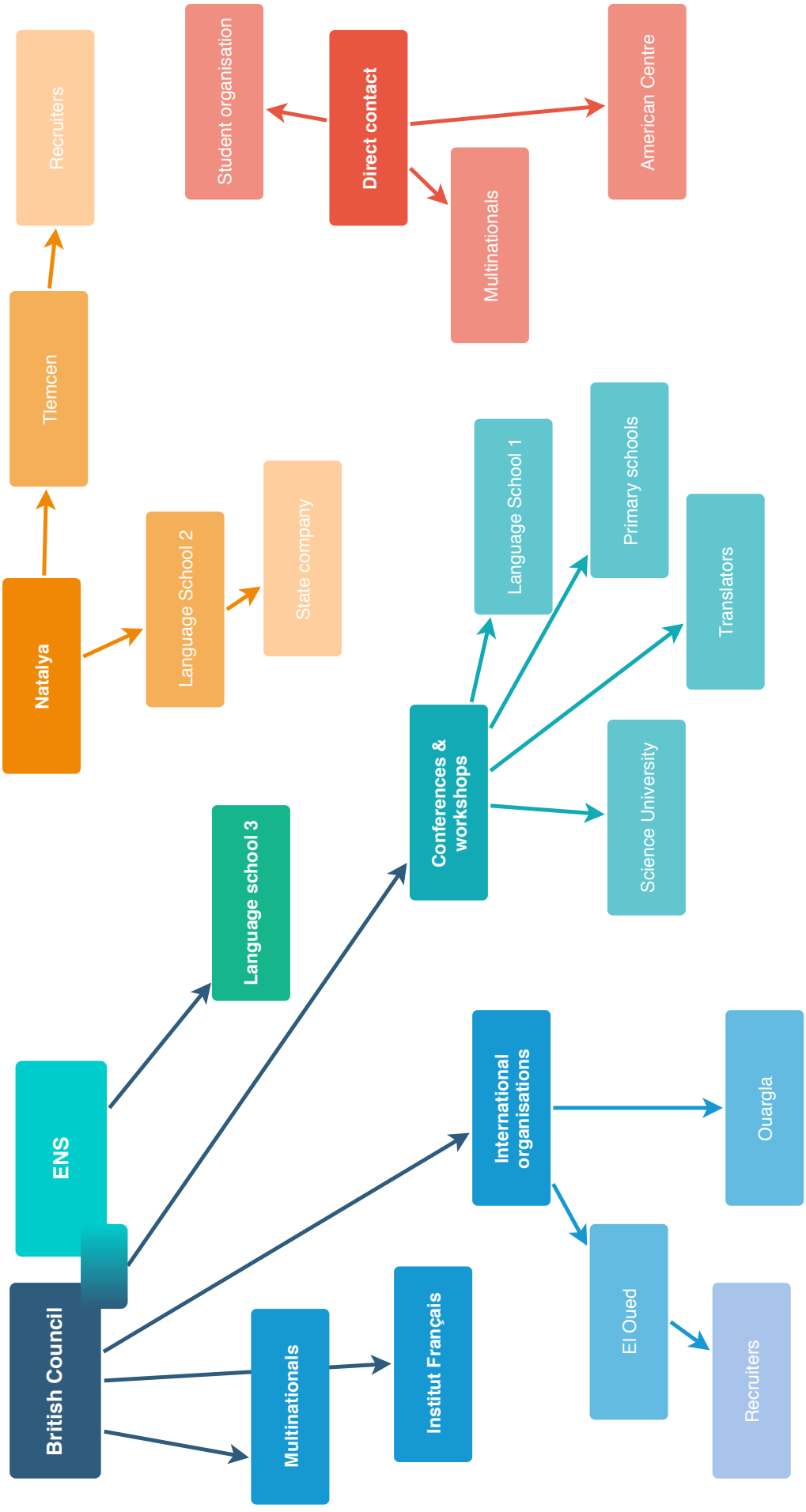

Figure 2.4: Networks map

practices, in the sense of metrolingual multitasking, defined as 'the ways in which such language use is frequently caught up in a fast-paced multiplicity of activities and cannot therefore be reduced to a functionnal account of language use in particular domains, where each language can be tied to an activity or interaction' (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2014, p. 258) as well as metrolingua francas, or the shared communicative practices which emerge moment-by-moment in superdiverse multilingual interactions (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2014). If we consider that multilingualism 'is not what individuals have and don't have, but what the environment, as structured determinations and interactional emergence, enables and disables' (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 197), then cities represent spaces where multilingualism is (albeit unevenly) promoted and rewarded. The Algerian capital was thus chosen as the main location for fieldwork, in order to explore how sets of practices described as "new" and "foreign" were (re)produced, read and appropriated, and how practices fit within these discursive frameworks about English.

Nonetheless, it is also important to consider the ways in which Algiers was not representative of the rest of the country. The big cities of the north are considered more French-speaking than rural areas or the south. The vast majority of multinationals have their offices in Algiers only, with a minority of companies (those connected to the oil and gas industry) established in Hassi Messaoud, in the Sahara. Furthermore, participants spontaneously make comparisons between different parts of the country, both in socio-economic and linguistic terms, and hence it was essential to gain a wider understanding of the social and linguistic contexts in which these impressions were formed.

I therefore chose to conduct shorter trips to three other locations in order to provide contrasting points to my data. While direct replication of my Algiers study with a different ENS was not possible due to authorisation issues, I visited universities and language schools in Ouargla (South), El Oued (South East) and Tlemcen (West), and conducted interviews and focus groups with students, teachers, recruiters and translators in addition to participant observation, thereby mirroring the original methodology on a smaller scale. A longer time-scale would have been necessary in order to be able to draw specific conclusions about regional differences, but the data gathered provides both corroborating and contrasting evidence to the results of my study in Algiers. Ouargla is located in the Sahara, close to oil and gas field operations, and has benefited from sustained foreign investment and a large and renowned university. Tlemcen is a culturally- and historically-rich urban centre whose university has an excellent reputation. El Oued is a smaller town in a conservative agricultural area near the Tunisian border, with the economy increasingly focusing on the import-export sector and a relatively new (but expanding) university.

2.2.2 Limitations

Ethnographic work remains closely tied to the subjectivity of the researcher. Being relatively young, I was quite close in age to the young people I worked with and developed many relations of friendships, and more experienced teachers and academics often very kindly used the opportunity to unofficially

"mentor" me. Being a foreign female allowed for greater interactions with both sexes, and as an outsider many participants wanted to explain and show things to me that they would have expected an Algerian to know, thereby making logical processes more explicit. However, being seen as an English-speaking foreigner from the UK also encouraged a certain performativity to discourses and practices of English, which I attempted to alleviate by attending the same spaces several times and conducting both formal and informal interviews with the same participants, over the course of several days or several months. As French-born but with a generic Southern British accent, perception of me either as French- or English-speaking depending on the context people encountered me in or how I was introduced to them often altered their responses, or rather the aspects of their discourses and practices that they chose to foreground. This was a particular strength of participant observation and of my particular positionality, but also meant that I was not able to access other facets as readily and that language questions were immediately brought to the fore. I have used interviews with foreign non-francophone English speakers from a variety of backgrounds (both Arabic- and non-Arabic-speakers), to understand how their experiences might have differed from mine.

The difficulties of obtaining official authorisations to conduct research in some institutions (as ministerial approval was required), the absence of established procedures to gain authorisations and consequent delays and the compulsory reliance on gatekeepers in order to secure these meant that some of my proposed field work sites fell through at the eleventh hour, and others could not be accessed at all. My inability to obtain visas for longer than thirty days at first, the rescinding of my residency papers and subsequent uncertain status also complicated my research and prevented me from conducting the longer period of observations in secondary schools which I had initially planned. Nonetheless, I was able to replace these with shorter observations in primary schools and interviews with primary school teachers, as well as interviews and participant observation with secondary teachers during training courses and workshops, which gave me a glimpse of the perceptions and language context of the "younger generation".

Most problematically, it was impossible for me to directly investigate the use of English by working class young people who did not attend higher education, especially males. While my status as an outsider allowed me to flout some rules of expected behaviour, I did not share a wide enough linguistic repertoire with them to establish either trust or communication, especially in a context where journalists and researchers are not always welcome. I therefore had to rely on interviews with gatekeepers and outsider-insiders such as sports journalists and youth workers in order to question the data found by working mostly with students and professionals.

In addition, while I attempted to conduct contrastive studies outside Algiers, my stays were of different lengths and I as a researcher held a different status. In El Oued, I was invited as a speaker in the context of a careers fair, to talk about languages and employability. In Ouargla I accompanied a World Learning member of staff who was conducting meetings at the Career Centre. In Tlemcen, I was invited by the English Department to present my research to current students following previous collaboration between the department and my supervisor. The data obtained in these regions thus

purposes to highlight consistencies and differences, aiming to ask more questions to be investigated rather than offering a complete comparative framework. More research is needed to understand not only regional dynamics but also how discourses and practices of English are appropriated and re-located in rural areas.

Crucially, the anonymity required by the Ethical Review process at the university was mostly puzzling or even rejected by my participants. Many asked that I use their own name, and enforcing the removal of their name to be replaced by a pseudonym would have been akin to symbolic violence. I therefore asked them to choose the name they would prefer to be called in the study, as well as how they would prefer to be described.

2.2.3 Key participants

A list of all interviews is presented in chapter 5.5. Over the course of this thesis, some participants are quoted more than others, and they are introduced below. For some this is due to me meeting them several times and across several spaces, and therefore having more opportunities for formal interviews and discussions, as well as presenting my preliminary conclusions to them for comments. They are not inherently more noteworthy and are not meant as examples of a "type", but rather the themes and experiences they relate echoed common responses in the field, and they might have expressed more in their interviews than others (who might have provided more extended comments only in conversations instead) and therefore I am able to present more verbatim responses. They are introduced in alphabetical order (see also Figure 2.5).

Abderrahmane and **Ouarda** were interviewed together, although I only knew Adberrahmane prior to the recording. They were both teachers in a private language school in central Algiers, but came from different parts of the country. She was a 20-something Algéroise who grew up in a relatively privileged neighbourhood, whereas he was in his early 30s and grew up in Constantine, a big city in the East of the country. They both studied languages at university and learnt other European languages in their free time.

Amina was the director of a private language school in central Algiers, whom I met several times as I observed lessons and presented my research in her school. She grew up in a small town in Kabylia (Berber-speaking region near Algiers) but came to the capital for university. She taught English in Sixth Form colleges (post-16 education, similar to the French lycées) in different areas of Algiers, as well as in higher education at the teacher training college.

I met **Ayoub** while observing in the English department in Tlemcen. A high-achieving PhD student, he was active in several student clubs on campus and, as most postgraduate students, he also taught on undergraduate modules at the university.

Djallil was on the management board of a small marketing company based in Algiers. After his

English degree, he taught in different language schools in the capital for ten years, and his experience in teacher training and managing courses had led him to his current post. He was involved in student clubs while at university, interested in developing mentoring and training programmes for students to ease their transition into the workplace, and still promoted and supported English learning amongst his colleagues and family. He travelled a lot for his hobby.

Feryel was a teacher and career counsellor in Ouargla, and was in her late 20s. Extremely active and enthusiastic, she spent her free time volunteering as a community organiser, working especially with children in her local area, and her summers as a volunteer English teacher in various parts of the globe. She grew up in Ouargla but went to university in Algiers.

Ilyes graduated from the English department in Tlemcen and went on to become a teacher in private language schools. He was particularly passionate about intercultural learning, and managed the courses for the many foreigners who come to the city to learn Arabic.

I originally met **Hicheme** when he attended a session at an English-speaking space in Algiers, and our paths crossed several times subsequently. An undergraduate Pharmacy student born and raised in the capital, he travelled extensively through his studies and work placements.

Lounès was the director of his own language school in Ouargla, but also worked as a career counsellor and English teacher at the university. He grew up in the city.

Meriem was the Training and Professional Development manager for a large national company in Algiers. She studied English at university and was keen to use her language skills in her career. She had worked for the company for over twenty years, first as a translator and interpreter and then moving on to training and professional development. When I first met her she had just completed her teacher training qualifications in order to be able to set up and deliver in-house English courses.

Tarik was an English teacher in several language schools across the capital. He grew up in a working-class neighbourhood in central Algiers, and remained there throughout his studies and work apart from his two years of military service in the Sahara.

I met **Salma** in El Oued during a conference, but she was born, grew up and still lived in Hassi Messaoud, where most of the headquarters of multinationals dealing with oil and gas are located. Her family was originally from the East, she studied in Algiers, and travelled extensively throughout the country. An English graduate, she worked as a recruiter but also blogged about personal development, study skills and career counselling in French and English.

The table in Figure 2.5 provides an overview of key participants. For "languages spoken in the family" I have used the denomination given by the participants, including when they used different ones to talk about the same practices (e.g. 'Arabic / derja'). Not all participants volunteered information about the languages they spoke in the home, and some were reluctant to discuss it, being suspicious of personal questions in what they perceived was supposed to be a series of conversations about "En-

Name	Gender	Met in	Grew up in	Main English-speaking space	Languages spoken at home (self-report)
Abderrahmane	M	Algiers	Constantine	Language school	Arabic / Algerian dialect
Ouarda	F	Algiers	Algiers	Language school	French, Algerian dialect, English
Amina	F	Algiers	Kabylia	Language school	?
Ayoub	M	Tlemcen	Tlemcen	University	?
Djallil	M	Algiers	Algiers	Company	Derja, French
Feryel	F	Ouargla	Ouargla	University	Arabic-French, French
Hicheme	M	Algiers	Algiers	Cultural Centre	French, Derja / Arabic
Ilyes	M	Tlemcen	Tlemcen	Language school	Arabic
Lounès	M	Ouargla	Ouargla	University	Arabic
Salma	F	El Oued	Hassi Messaoud	Company	French, Arabic
Meriem	F	Algiers	Algiers	Company	?
Tarik	M	Algiers	Algiers	Language school	Algerian Arabic / Derja

Figure 2.5: Key participants

glish". Many also responded by talking about the languages they used every day, which includes in the workplace. As discussed in the previous chapter, the demarcation between languages is artificial, and people do not necessarily think in terms of bounded languages when they speak within the home, and it does not reflect the full extent of their linguistic repertoire. A discussion of what is entailed by each label is outside the scope of this thesis, and as English is but rarely spoken in the home, my research focused on spaces where it would be used rather than tallying up other languages.

2.3 Data collection

2.3.1 Analysis of discourses

Writings about English in Algeria are both secondary and primary sources in my research, in the sense that they provide a context in which to place the study of practices, but also need to be deconstructed in order to investigate how discourses at various levels constitute and maintain language ideologies. The latter reflect power relations not simply as a coercion from above but also 'as a local manifestation of how language is understood' (Seargeant, 2009, p. xi). Understanding how "English" is apprehended, constructed and integrated within social worlds in Algeria requires reflecting on several levels of discourses, from official to semi-official (media, corporate, cultural organisations) and individual, from the nation to the group and the personal. As a particular language 'accrues specific cultural meaning within a society', these discourses form a crucial part of the context in which people's learning and use of the language happens (Seargeant, 2009, pp. 29–30) by reflecting and constituting 'social order, a dominant (or common-sense) way of conceptualising relationships (including power relationships)

between different social actors and their practices' (Ekinsmyth, 2014, p. 1235).

Throughout my research I gathered the following types of sources:

- governmental: Algerian government policy, declarations, and cooperation agreements with the UK, US or international organisations, as available online and through relevant contacts
- corporate: consultancy reports and publicity materials produced by international organisations as available online and through contacts with relevant companies and organisations
- academic: academic writing published in French and English
- practitioners': teaching materials
- individual: fieldnotes and interview transcripts

The aim of the document analysis was to complement, contrast and further reflect upon ethnographic data rather than conduct in-depth policy or textbook analysis, and therefore only the documents used in the thesis are listed in the bibliography.

Due to ethical concerns (especially regarding consent) and time constraints, I had not originally planned on conducting research on social media use. However, the omnipresence of Facebook in Algerian society (often the only source of up-to-date information and the only way of contacting people) and the repeated mentions of English as being more present online meant that ignoring social media data would be obscuring rather than clarifying my research. As an invited member of Facebook groups of the student associations I worked with, I have presented in this thesis some of the information that was shared with me online, not as an in-depth study of online discourses but as additional context to how practices are relocalised in English, both on- and offline.

2.3.2 Participant observation

As Blommaert & Dong point out, 'ethnographic fieldwork is aimed at finding out things that are often not seen as important but belong to the implicit structures of people's life' (2010, p. 3), and therefore through active engagement in activities and relationships over the course of several months my purpose was 'not to determine "the truth" but to reveal the multiple truths apparent in others' lives' (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 4). I focused on becoming fully immersed in the ordinary routines, opportunities and constraints of my participants (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 3), in order to build shared understanding of frames of references and the articulation of discourses and practices. As Pollner & Emerson explain, 'society consists of the ceaseless, ever-unfolding transactions through which members engage one another and the objects, topics, and concerns that they find relevant' (2001, p. 120), and only ethnographic fieldwork could allow me to access these patterns and how they become indexical of wider social, economic, cultural, political or historical dimensions.

At the ENS, my observations took place weekly over the course of the academic year, apart from holidays, examinations and a three-week period in November 2016 when the students were on strike.

I became attached to a third year class, and went to their lessons with them three days a week between October 2016 and October 2017. In the autumn of 2016 and 2017 I also attended classes of the year below and the year above. In addition, I set up a closed Facebook group for students who were part of my observed cohort. The group was an opportunity for them to keep in contact with me throughout the year and beyond, in order to ask questions about the research and comment on what has happened in class as well as an opportunity for me to "give back" to them through English conversation practice. Even though the main purpose of this group was originally to 'generate a collaborative approach to the research which engages both the interviewer and respondent in a joint enterprise' (Oakley, 1981, p. 44), the students mostly waited to hear my updates and did not contribute much. Nonetheless, it remained an important space for me to provide them with additional resources that they had asked me for in face-to-face discussions, as well as keeping them updated with how the research that they were a part of was progressing.

In other spaces, I also used all possible opportunities to conduct overt participant observation, either by teaching, presenting or actively participating in sessions, rather than behaving as a notepad-wielding external observer. To access and understand the multiple levels of discourses and practices which connect English to social worlds, I needed to play a role within the processes I was seeking to analyse (T. Jenkins, 1994, p. 451). In most cases, this meant "hanging out", in the sense of a 'physical, informal and prolonged immersion within a cultural environment', including taking part in a range of activities not always linked to my research questions (Browne & McBride, 2015, pp. 34–35). As a relatively young female and still a student, I was able to socialise with students or other young people in most spaces, and my status as a former languages teacher also helped me establish a relationship with primary and secondary school teachers at training events. As much as possible, I attended several sessions over the course of several days or months. This approach was not always feasible or practical in multinationals and non-education-related environments, where I had to rely on interviews and informal conversations over a series of visits and with several members of staff rather than participant observation.

Data from participant observation is quoted throughout as (fieldnotes DATE), and includes direct daily writings, transcripts of audio notes and later entries reflecting on longer periods of time.

2.3.3 Interviews

Within the framework of my participant observation, I conducted semi-structured and informal interviews. Some of these interviews were retrospective, in the sense of aiming at discussing events and comments made during observations with the participants. As well as completing observation data, they aimed to alleviate the 'one-sidedness of textual interpretation resulting from the researcher's own reading of his or her data' (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010, p. 15) through the 'decentring of interpretive authority' (Higgins, 2009, p. 17). They were conducted either as individual interviews or within a focus group format as part of the Q&A session after a presentation. These interviews were particularly

fruitful in highlighting the most salient (and common throughout the country) discourses around English as well as underlining aspects of my preliminary conclusions which seemed either obvious or counter-intuitive to participants.

It was not always possible or productive to record the interviews, but the length of my stay in the field allowed me to use "repeated interviewing", which produces greater depth, granularity and complexity due to 'being responsive to, rather than seeking to avoid, respondent reactions to the interview situation and experience' (Laslett & Rapoport, 1975, p. 968, quoted in Oakley, 1981, p. 44). Even lengthy formal interviews were always supplemented with informal interviews, which were recorded in note form in situ, or informal conversations, which were recorded in my fieldwork diary after the events. In the case of a formal interview, the participants were subsequently given either the full transcript or the recording and were able to comment on, amend or withdraw any information given. Very few asked for any amendments, and these were exclusively of a grammatical or lexical nature rather than a change of content.

Interviews are quoted throughout depending on how they were recorded: audio recorded interviews and those which were comprehensively simulteanously transcribed are labelled as (interview DATE), whereas informal interviews or interviews where it was not possible to record or take extensive notes during the interviewing process appear as (conversation DATE). When notes on informal interviews were only taken at the end of the day or later, they are labelled as (fieldnotes DATE). The full list of interviews cited in the thesis can be found in Appendix C.

2.3.4 Semiotic landscape

I also integrated Scollon & Scollon's geosemiotics methodology to my ethnographic approach, understood as 'the study of the social meaning of the material placement of signs and discourses and of our actions in the material world' (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 2). This methodological framework builds on Landry & Bourhis's definition of the linguistic landscape as 'the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs and public signs on government buildings' (Landry & Bourhis, 1997, p. 25). The concept of semiotic (rather than linguistic) landscape foregrounds multimodality and the integrated nature of discourses expressed through script or through other visual means as well as the built environment (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010, p. 2), with the aim of bringing 'together the study of texts (…) the study of social interaction, and the study of the material world in which human actions take place' (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 13). Studying the semiotic landscape within which discourses and practices operated, as well as engaging with this landscape as a discursive site, allowed me to analyse how language ideologies around English were produced and reproduced at different levels.

It was impossible for me to systematically survey the entire capital, much less the entire country, but because signs which could be labelled as relating to "English" were comparatively rare (compared

to other languages), I chose to record every sign with English I encountered, which I later expanded to any reference to English. The main roads of Algiers' city centre were surveyed systematically, and I took the opportunity afforded to me by my extensive travels throughout the city and its suburbs to continue mapping. I used a similar approach when travelling to other regions, starting with a survey of the main arteries before recording all other instances I came across. The main streets and shopping areas were chosen as they are some of the main crossing and congregating spaces, and thus are an ideal vantage point from which to explore the expression of multilingualism, patriotism, national pride, conflict between groups or strategies of public order (Ben-Rafael et al., 2010, pp. xii–xiv).

I took photographs or transcripts of signs and markings, which I later complemented by reflective interviews in order to understand how they are constructed, indexed and understood locally (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 72), as 'the understanding of the visual semiotic systems at play in any particular instance relies crucially on an ethnographic understanding of the meanings of these systems within specific communities of practices' (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 160).

2.3.5 Methods of analysis

Prior to going into the field, I used line-by-line coding with a preliminary sample of representative texts (see Appendix A), which yielded a set of initial categories. These key words were used as questions to guide the systematic analysis of fieldnotes, interview transcripts and semiotic landscape data, questioning and refining the categories and themes iteratively.

I also produced in-process memos, short analyses 'to identify and explore initial theoretical directions and possibilities' and intended to 'provide insight, direction, and guidance for the ongoing fieldwork' (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 123). The tentative conclusions and questions generated through in-process memos could then be presented to participants, either in groups or in individual interviews, and their responses led to close re-reading of notes, codes and memos for new categories and themes, or new angles onto existing themes. Because I was interested in uncovering discourses around English and conditions of deployment of these discourses, or in Emerson et al's terms 'when, how, to whom, and, if possible, for what purposes people explain their crises' (2011, p. 151), it was crucial to go back to source data as much as possible and question any emerging category through close re-reading and questioning of fieldnotes, transcripts, recordings and images.

Initial analyses were refined into integrative code memos, which formed the basis of fieldwork reports, conference papers and journal articles throughout my research. These longer analytical memos were also fed back to participants for additional data collection and analysis. Categories, themes and questions themselves were never fixed but rather part of an ongoing cycle of data collection, coding and memo writing.

For images, analysis was based on a 'holistic, interpretive lens guided by strategic questions' (Saldana, 2009, p. 42). In practice, this meant adapting Kress & van Leuwen's guiding geosemiotic ques-

tions to the categories emerging from preliminary coding: '1) How are social relationships in the world represented in images; 2) How are social relationships between the world and the image constructed; 3) What are the concrete relationships between image representations and textual representations?; 4) How do social actors in the world make use of pictures (images and texts) in taking social actions?' (quoted in Scollon and Scollon, 2003, p. 108).

2.4 Conclusion

An ethnographic approach proved the most fruitful in order to conduct a study of the place of the English language in Algeria, not in terms of a dialectological record or pedagogical assessment but to establish an understanding of how global, national and local discourses around "English" are appropriated into language practices, and how this intersects with existing social, economic, cultural and political hierarchies. I combined analysis of discourses and the semiotic landscape with participant observation and interviews, and contrasted my findings from the capital with three other cities, using an iterative and exploratory process which also provides a solid basis for further research on the topics discussed in this thesis.

A paramount concern throughout my doctoral research was the issue of ethics within a conflictual field, nestled within the wider issues of the ethics of the researcher on English in a postcolonial and neoliberal world. As Kubota (2015, p. 34) points out, the academic discourse on English is inseparable from the global English Language Teaching industry:

> the neoliberal discourse that champions the omnipresence and universal usefulness of English (or simply English as a world-dominant language) actually benefits scholars who engage in intellectual activities of promoting pluralist perspectives of English.

This is compounded by the fact that I am a white European doing research on practices and representations in a country of the Global South, which risks contributing to the maintenance of unequal power relationships between academic circles and to the reproduction of stereotypes and homogenisation of experiences of "the Algerians" (Walseth, 2006, pp. 81–83). Obbo (1990) calls attention to the racialised 'politics of anthropological knowledge' where certain exogenously-defined social groups such as "natives", "the poor" or minorities are "understood" by white Western academics. I chose ethnographic methods and retrospective interviews to mitigate these unequal power relationships by avoiding posing participants as subordinate data-producing machines (Oakley, 1981, pp. 40–41), creating channels to allow them to contribute as interpretive experts. As Tikly & Bond suggest, questions of 'who "owns" the data; and who benefits from publishing and disseminating research findings' (2013, p. 432) are crucial in a postcolonial research setting. These were some of the key decisions my methodology has sought to address, in order to provide a more refined understanding of how people negotiate the interplay between language and identity and the role(s) English is playing in these dynamics in a context where it was not the colonial language.

Chapter 3

Learners and spaces

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, investigating whether "English" is spreading to "new regions" in fact means examining who learns and uses English, what symbolic values are indexed by it, and which practices are being relocalised into this language. Assessing how many speak English, what repertoire and skills they possess and to what extent they make use of them in their everyday life is difficult. This is not particular to Algeria but the paucity of in-depth studies focusing on English complicates this evaluation further. Existing research mostly concerns itself with attitudes and thus often simply mentions English competence as an aside (or even 'English' as a standalone concept without mentioning potential speakers or users), or concentrates on specific perceived teaching and learning problems such as pronunciation or writing (Benbachir, 2012; Benrabah, 2007a; Iddou-Derraz, 2009; Mami, 2013, amongst others). Media commentators, politicians and interview participants estimate the overall numbers of English speakers and average levels in English communicative skills in Algeria to be relatively low compared to other countries in both the Middle East and Africa.

Two main studies (or series of studies in the case of the English Proficiency Index) have attempted to quantify and qualify "English" in Algeria. They rely on indicators such as TOEFL scores or online tests hosted on their platform (EF Education First, 2015), or do not provide information as to how their estimations were obtained (Euromonitor International, 2012). In all cases, the general level of English was found to be low, with only 7% of the population speaking the language at an intermediate level (British Council, 2016, p. 29), which is lower than in Morocco and Tunisia. Reports point out that actual use across the population is probably even more reduced due to self-selection bias in the samples. Nonetheless, my interviews with English-speaking students and teachers show that very few have heard of EF or have taken online placement tests, and TOEFL uptake is low due to the prohibitively high cost of the exam and the relatively small numbers who go on to study in the UK. As is explored in more details throughout this chapter, this means that even though general English levels might be

lower than in Morocco and Tunisia due to the absence of a tourism industry, it is harder to gauge proficiency of younger learners who tend to turn to online resources rather than structured classes.

In this chapter, the question of where English users can be found and what role the language plays within Algerians' linguistic repertoire takes into account how and when Algerians themselves see and hear English in their daily lives, bringing into dialogue the semiotic landscape, policies, lived experiences and discourses about the practices of others. The prevalent narrative of English being absent from Algerian streets is exemplified and nuanced through analysis of the semiotic landscape, before examining the language awareness and communicative skills expected to be gained by all Algerians who go through the compulsory education system. This chapter combines existing insights from reports and studies with the additional data collected during my fieldwork to offer a more complex understanding of who learns what and where. It explores both language policy and teachers' and learners' reflection on their experiences, before examining who learns English outside the school system, and the strategies and sites used by different socio-demographic groups to develop their linguistic skills. It focuses not only on English Departments in universities but also on the articulation between different levels and domains of the education system, and how different spaces intersect, from social media to university campuses, from private language schools to secondary classrooms. Considering spaces of learning and use, who accesses these spaces, as well as what is described as "English", enable a more refined understanding of who learns and uses English. Investigating these spaces also situates English users within their wider socio-cultural context and forms the backdrop of the analysis of discourses around English undertaken in more detail in chapters 4 and 5.

3.2 Absent? English in the streets and the semiotic landscape

English is relatively inconspicuous in the academic literature related to languages in Algeria. As discussed in chapter 1, most of the research and commentary on this topic focuses on various combinations of conflict between Standard Arabic, Algerian Arabic, French, Tamazight and local Berber languages. When English in mentioned, it consists in one or two sentences, mostly relegating the language to a minor issue. The foregrounding of Arabic, French and Tamazight in research stems from their much greater importance in the linguistic setting but also reinforces the associations between English and absence, foreign-ness and novelty. English is also particularly perceived as international because it is devoid of these socio-cultural connotations which are very present for French or Arabic, or even Spanish. Whether used in band names or shop names, hastily graffitied on tables and walls or as a status update on Facebook, it is mostly the 'odd stereotyped word or phrase, bearing little if any information load, but seeming merely to evoke a vaguely international flavour' (Davies & Bentahila, 2006, p. 387). Earlier research into language choices in popular music highlight similar dynamics, where English is becoming increasingly used by some rai performers 'in order to widen their audiences' (Davies & Bentahila, 2006, p. 377) but that 'the status of English in this part of the world is very much that of a foreign language, with no particular historical or cultural links with the region' (Davies

& Bentahila, 2006, p. 387). This section will explore discourses of "absence" and provide a brief introduction to the presence of English in the semiotic landscape and on the streets, which will be analysed further in chapters 4 and 5. The question of the visibility of English is important in understanding how (and whether) discourses about English found in interviews and across English-speaking places are echoed in the wider semiotic landscape.

English is considered an "absent" language in Algeria. In fact, one university lecturer's reaction upon hearing of my research topic was echoed several times in the following months, as she cried out in disbelief 'mais il n'y a pas d'anglais ici![1]' (fieldnotes 02/10/16). In his analysis of the Algerian linguistic situation, Dourari (2003, p. 9) underlined that English was used only by English teachers and a handful of interpreters, solely within their professional framework 'et presque jamais ailleurs[2]'. Secondary school teachers and teacher in private language schools also complained of the difficulties of their students making any progress in English as 'there's no English outside so the students can't learn' (fieldnotes 30/05-02/06/16, June-July 2017, 14/09/17). At a teacher training conference, one teacher asked the keynote speaker 'how can you convince pupils to learn a language that doesn't exist outside school?' (fieldnotes 01/06/16). Even university students who regularly attended English-language clubs and events expressed their concern that 'we can't practise' (fieldnotes 05/10/17). The concept of absence was a recurrent theme across all sites and age groups, and evaluation of the situation by participants ranged from viewing it as a neutral fact to considering it a concern or a problem.

In many settings where English was not the colonial language, its importance grew partly as a result of its use as a lingua franca for tourism or in business (J. Jenkins et al., 2011). In Algeria, tourism is limited and mostly consists of members of the diaspora and their families, and French remains the main commercial language (Chachou, 2013). Aymen, who works for an international organisation, stressed that even though there were many foreigners employed in oil fields or on construction sites, they mostly lived on compounds and so Algerians have very little interaction with them, whether Turkish, German, Filipino or Chinese (interview 04/11/15). Feng and Lang-hao, two Chinese construction workers in the West of the country, also related how very few market sellers or shop staff knew any English. In their experience, when they needed to leave the compound to shop they therefore mostly relied on sign language and a few common phrases in Arabic or French, but that they did not communicate much with the Algerian workers and tended to socialise amongst themselves (interview 13/12/17). English is only extremely rarely heard in the streets, and in fact over the course of my ten months of fieldwork I only heard it four times[3], always in Algiers, with two instances consisting of a stock phrase (expletives in both cases) used in the middle of a conversation in derja. The third time was a Sahraoui activist speaking about her work on the phone in a mixed café popular with educated young people. In the fourth case, two young Algéroises were welcoming their cousin who lived in Germany and 'didn't speak French' and so they found it easier to communicate in English while sat at an expensive terrace in the city centre (fieldnotes 23/02/17). Abderrahmane, who teaches English in

[1] but there's no English here!

[2] and nearly never elsewhere

[3] discounting airports

private language schools and has corporate clients in Algiers, summarised his experience of hearing or seeing English in daily life:

> Well for me, it's only at school. And then when I started teaching I came across it in the multinational companies I used to teach at. So basically at work. Basically work. You don't hear it on the streets. Unless if you see for example a tourist or something. (interview on 07/03/17)

Although Abderrahmane uses and hears English as part of his working life, professionals who do not work as teachers do not share his experience. Lylia and Nacer, who work for two different international companies and have frequent contacts with officials explained that English was 'absent from official spheres', and 'only spoken adequately' by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (fieldnotes 18/02/17, 03/03/17). Translators and interpreters working for ministries and for national companies painted a similar picture. English does not operate as an internal lingua franca, even with the non-Arabic speakers who travel or work in Algeria.

While in the years immediately following independence it would have been difficult to find books, newspapers or magazines in English apart from the prescribed textbooks (Hayane, 1989, p. 63), this is most definitely not the case today, with many book shops stocking English-language novels and language schools and university clubs organising English-language activities (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2). Strict import laws and the possibility of widespread electronic payment only being introduced in 2018 mean that ordering foreign language books online is not straightforward, but bookshops offer a (relatively limited) range of fiction as well as many learning resources. The Algiers International Book Fair (SILA), which takes place every year at the beginning of October, is an opportunity for booksellers and individuals to purchase novels, textbooks and dictionaries, with an increasing interest for English-language materials, especially for children (fieldnotes 04/10/16, 10/11/17). Many learners also rely on free-from-copyright and illegal soft copies available online (fieldnotes 04/12/16, 18/09/17, 25/09/17, 05/12/17). While French-language books are undoubtedly easy to source throughout the country, physical English-language resources are more prevalent in wealthier urban areas but remain much more accessible than any other foreign-language materials. There thus appears to be a market for English-language products, especially learning materials for children (see Figures 3.3 and 3.4), although numbers are dwarfed by the presence of French-language materials.

"English" is not only visible in the form of products on shelves and displayed prominently in shop windows, but many storefronts include names, advertising and logos in English. All the university buildings in Algiers sport their names in Arabic and in English only (see Fig 3.5), and have done so since the 2000s, although internal signage is all in Arabic and French. The location of the official harbour administration has been signalled by a large tile indicating "Algiers Port Authority" since the 1970s.

The vast majority of English visible in the semiotic landscape relates to food or fashion, with many restaurants (especially fast food) and clothes shops' names including some English words. The words in English are often directly transliterated (rather than translated) into Arabic, which is rarely done

Figure 3.1: Window of a bookshop and stationary shop in central Algiers

Figure 3.2: The "English section" of one of the most famous book shops in Algiers, tucked away underneath the stairs to the basement

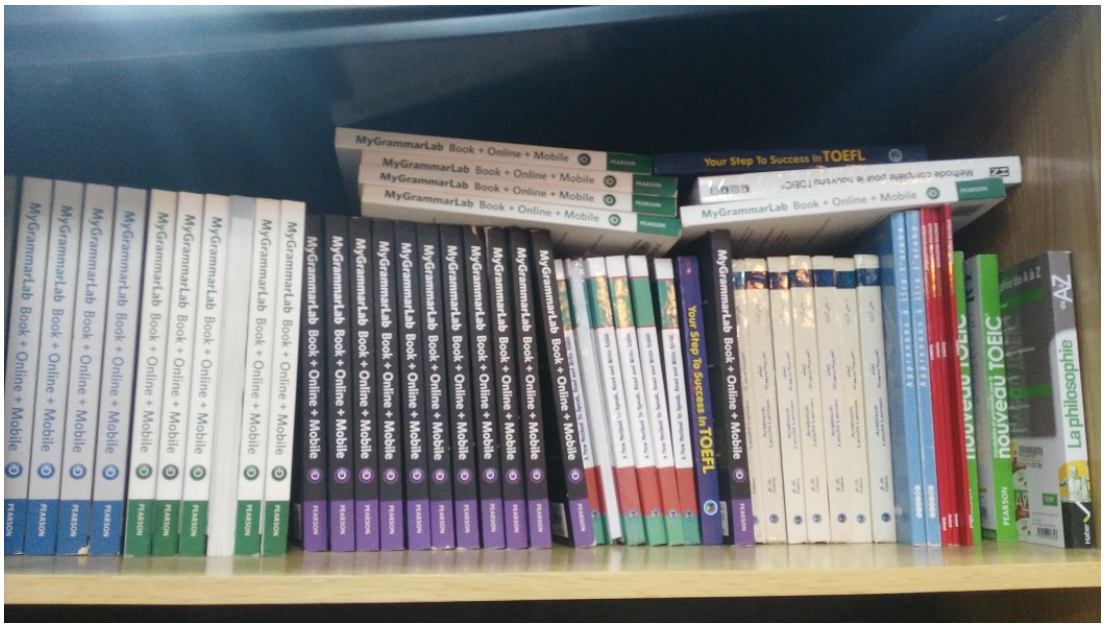

Figure 3.3: English language books available in the upmarket shopping centre at Bab Ezzouar

Figure 3.4: Window of a stationary shop in the centre of Tlemcen

Figure 3.5: All the buildings of the University of Algiers (here the Faculty of Law) are labelled in English and Arabic only on the main gate

for French. For example, in figure 4.8 the left-hand shop has its name ("Galaxy Food") transliterated while the right-hand shop has the additional information "fast food" transliterated into Arabic, while its name ("La Merveille Food", presumably in French) is only given in the Latin script (see subsection 4.2.3). Only the most upmarket places, in Algiers' city centre or wealthier areas, have cafés and restaurants where all the front branding is in English. Those places are also closely modelled on existing North American outlets and evoke "foreign" places, either in their colour scheme, design or name (see figure 3.6). However, more specialised information, either inside or outside the shop, remains in French or Arabic. When English is visible inside as well, it is used decoratively and continues to evoke "abroad" (often in stock images of London such as double-decker buses or the London-themed seat covering in figure 3.7). English can also be present in the shape of motivational or uplifting phrases, such as a quote from Dr Seuss on a university campus in the suburbs of Algiers, and a collection of quotes on love and happiness placed high on the walls of a café in El-Biar, a wealthy neighbourhood near the centre of the capital (figure 3.7). English seems to be restricted to highly decorative and evocative functions, possibly indexing prestige and global brands, but not used as a way of conveying information. How participants read and made sense of the semiotic landscape is discussed further in subsection 4.3.1.

Similarly in advertising, using English is mostly restricted to well-known linguistic items or Middle East and North Africa-wide marketing campaigns such as those for Reebok or UNESCO (fieldnotes 20/02/17, 01/06/17, 10/07/17). Most often, the information is provided in French and in Arabic, with

Figure 3.6: Two fashionable burger restaurants on rue Didouche Mourad, Algiers' main street

Figure 3.7: Examples of decorations in English

Figure 3.8: Translanguaging in adverts

only common lexical items used in English. For instance, figure 3.8 shows two adverts commonly found across the country and demonstrating how English is integrated within the linguistic repertoire: a car is promoted using the phrase "made in bladi" (made in my country) while a cheese spread is advertised under the name "Cheezy". Both adverts provide examples of translanguaging, whether entirely in the Latin script or using both Latin and Arabic scripts, but the place of "English" items is comparatively small. Although English is visible, its use would seem to conform to Davies and Bentahila's conclusions of evoking 'a vaguely international flavour' rather than as a main means of communication (2006, p. 387). This is further discussed in section 4.3.1.

Graffiti is relatively uncommon in Algeria compared to Europe, but still represent an counterpoint to official signs by providing opportunities for different voices to emerge on the walls. For street artists English represents but one of the medium they use (Ouaras, 2009, 2018), and informal writings make use of English in a highly formulaic manner, to express love, friendship, dissatisfaction or (much more rarely) index an element of English-speaking popular culture. Figure 3.9 exemplify the types of informal graffiti found across Algeria, from football references ("the twelfth player") to swear words, love declarations, film references ("back to the futur") and playful rebellion ("smok weed" ; "yes" on a no parking sign). Although to some extent present all over the country, informal graffiti and street art other than state-sanctioned paintings of historical scenes are rare outside of the main metropolises, hence most of the data came from Algérois walls. The most common use of English is for love declarations, mostly found in places patronised by teenagers and ranging from small messages in correction fluids and marker pens to larger markings sprayed on. Short messages in English were also commonly found inside classrooms, from secondary schools to universities, although much less commonly than in Arabic or French. It was not possible to take photos of such graffiti and students and teachers systematically dismissed them as reprehensible actions (fieldnotes 20/11/16, 15/09/17, 11/10/17).

In the ongoing political protests which have taken place across Algeria since February 2018, al-

Figure 3.9: Examples of graffiti found in Algiers and Ouargla

though signs in English are often foregrounded in the international news media, the vast majority of signs are in French, Arabic and Tamazight. When written in English, some of the messages are clearly aimed at the outside (e.g. Figure 3.10), while others combine well-known phrases in English with slogans in Arabic and/or French (e.g. Figure 3.11 and Figure 3.12). English is mostly performative rather than communicative, relying on memes, catchy slogans ("power to the people"), a handful of key terms and references to popular culture ("Game of Thrones"), paralleling practices found in the wider semiotic landscape. Language use in protests can be seen as examples of non-elite languaging, and an example of the role which English plays within a wider range of people's linguistic repertoires. Nonetheless, it is extremely difficult to analyse who produced these signs and how they are read locally (and how representative the signs published on social media are), and therefore the wider place and significance of "English" in the protests, without undertaking more fieldwork.

The sporadic presence of English in translanguaging practices related to food, fashion and fun in the semiotic landscape, combined with narratives of "absence", point to the language indexing global links and international presence, but also to its marginality within the Algerian linguistic context. The initial overview of English in the streets and the semiotic landscape confirms that drawing conclusions regarding who uses English and what they do with it must be complemented by an understanding of who learns English, where and how (discussed in the remainder of this chapter) as well as how practices are interpreted, justified and re-structured by discourses about English and English speakers (chapters 4 and 5).

Figure 3.10: Placard calling out the US to refrain from intervening. The photograph was widely shared on Facebook and Twitter after the 8 March protests.

Figure 3.11: Banners printed out by students from Sciences Po Algiers for the 15 March protests, shared on Twitter by journalist Farah Souames

Figure 3.12: Banners from the 31 May protests in Algiers, shared on Twitter by Hassiba, a journalist

3.3 English in the compulsory education system: policy and practices

3.3.1 Language policy and language planning

Understanding the place of English in contemporary Algeria requires taking into account how the state currently views and defines this language, and the role government envisages it to play in the country. This implies considering both language policy and language planning, with the former consisting of 'conscious choices made in the domain of relationships between language and social life as a whole' while the latter denotes the 'research and implementation of the means necessary for the application of a language policy' (Calvet, 1998, p. 114). This separation of terms is broadly similar to the conceptual use of politique linguistique and planification linguistique in Francophone literature on the topic, and therefore research on language policy published in either languages considers similar components. Official discourses regarding languages are thus expressed in policy language status planning (the symbolic place of different languages) and corpus planning (which standard(s) will be recognised), although some authors would also add acquisition planning as a separate category of political actions, closely related to status planning (Canagarajah & Ashraf, 2013, p. 269). Examining language policy and planning therefore involves analysing 'how elites use language to define the group, and encourage solidarity and consensus within it' (Wright, 2004, p. 13) and how processes of elite closure are linked to both status and acquisition planning (Canagarajah & Ashraf, 2013, p. 269). While definitions of in- and out-group identities are particularly salient when discussing which languages are given the status of official or national, these processes are also impacted by which languages are labelled as "foreign", the hierarchy of these additional languages, the place they are being given in the forging of national

School	Class	age at entry	French	English	National Examinations
Ecole Primaire (primary school)	1ère AP	6	*Only in private schools*	*Only in private schools*	
	2ème AP	7			
	3ème AP	8	Taught as first foreign language		
	4ème AP	9			
	5ème AP	10			Examens de 5ème Année Primaire
Collège d'Enseignement Moyen (Middle School)	1ère AM	11	Taught as first foreign language	Taught as second foreign language	
	2ème AM	12			
	3ème AM	13			
	4ème AM	14			Brevet d'Enseignement Moyen (BEM)
Lycée d'Enseignement Secondaire (secondary school)	1ère AS	15	Taught as first foreign language	Taught as second foreign language	
	2ème AS	16			
	3ème AS	17			Baccalauréat

Figure 3.13: French and English in the Algerian school system

identity(ies) and how political and education institutions justify their role in terms of national interest, personal growth or citizen-building.

Despite the overhaul of the education system, the place of English within it has remained largely unchanged since the 1980s (see Figure 3.13). It is taught as a foreign language from the first year of secondary school (age 11), in some policy documents being called the 'second foreign language' after French (Ministère de l'Education Nationale, 2005). As part of the second wave of the education reforms launched in 2003, the new curricula and textbooks were updated again in September 2017, focusing more on communicative skills and including audio materials, which were previously not always available. Students should all receive around 2.5 hours of English tuition per week, amounting to around 60 hours a year, for the five years of compulsory schooling between the ages of 11 and 16. In practice, the drop-out rates mean that 36% of students who enter the first year of secondary leave before the fourth year (age 14-15) and only 41% (of students who enter the first year of secondary) pass their Brevet d'Enseignement Moyen [4] (Assistance Technique Afrique du Nord, 2018), thereby reducing even further the number of students exposed to compulsory formal English tuition. After a common first year of "secondary school", students choose between streams, with the languages stream studying English up to 8 hours a week whereas students in scientific streams following 2-2.5 hours of English tuition per week. While there have been demands by parents to introduce English language teaching earlier, including a recent Facebook campaign to start tuition in primary school, up to now, the only pupils who are taught English at the primary level come from the small private sector (approximatively 380 schools across all levels of education (Assistance Technique Afrique du Nord, 2018), where French (rather than Arabic) is the main medium of instruction.

Language acquisition planning must be seen within a wider policy discourse regarding the status of English. Bamgbose argues that language policy world-wide centres around discussions of the place of English but considers that 'it is not likely (...) the push for it [is] born of any nationalistic con-

[4]The BEM is an exam at the end of the fourth year of "middle school" (age 15) and is a requirement to enrol in "secondary school" (ages 15-19)

siderations' (Bamgbose, 2006, p. 546). This is highly debatable in the case of Algeria, as both official legislation and politicians emphasise the relation between the teaching of foreign languages in schools and 'les défis scientifiques et technologiques que doit relever notre pays pour rattraper le retard dans ce domaine'[5] (Ministère de l'Education Nationale, 2008, p. 15). The notion of the study of English as being in the national interest can be found in curricula, as for instance the "secondary school" curriculum emphasises English as a prerequisite to 'réussir dans le monde de demain'[6] and an essential means to access knowledge (Ministère de l'Education Nationale, 2005). These priorities are echoed in cooperation agreements at governmental level, as a 2013 work programme between the UK and Algeria notes 'the primordial role devoted to the learning and promotion of the English language to reinforce access to global academic, technological and cultural networks' (Gouvernement de la République Algérienne, 2013), and Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research officials have repeated their commitment to both the promotion of English and cooperation with the UK (fieldnotes 31/05/16, 19-20/10/16). English is described as a political priority because equated to a language of access (to knowledge, science), opportunities (success) and "the future". Global discourses which imbue English with positive symbolism and inherently transformative developmental effects are reproduced in language status and acquisition planning. By justifying English teaching in terms of personal and national development, policies also model the "ideal citizen", which through English can reach technological advances and personal success without "acculturation" (Commission Nationale des Programmes, 2016; Ministère de l'Education Nationale, 2005). The use of the latter term with regard to English is particularly important within the context of continued debates around French and Arabic and their links to Algerian identity.

3.3.2 Policy on the ground: who are the teachers?

As Wright points out, 'the power of state language policies to produce intended outcomes is severely constrained by a variety of social, political and economic structures' 2004, p. 2, and implementation and enactment at all levels must also be considered. This is especially true for education, where inspectors, school administrators and teachers themselves all influence the reading, appropriation, reproduction and application of policy (Ball et al., 2011). The question of enactment must therefore consider which aspects of corpus and status planning are reproduced and enacted by different societal actors, and which are challenged or modified and how.

Teachers in secondary school represent the first formal point of contact with English for the vast majority of Algerians: understanding their trajectories and experience is therefore crucial in explaining language ideologies and attitudes towards sets of language practices. More specific research would need to be conducted on the motivations for choosing a teaching career, but my fieldwork indicates a combination of utilitarian (getting a job), inspiration and enjoyment ("I was good at it") factors, which all contribute toward particular understandings of what "English" is, what it should be used for and its place within Algerian society.

[5] the scientific and technological challenges which our country must face up to in order to catch up in this area

[6] succeed in tomorrow's world

I originally intended to conduct ethnographic research in secondary schools, in order to observe what was being taught and how teaching was delivered, as well as interactions between teachers and pupils, and how young learners were crafting definitions and practices of English. However, due to authorisation issues this was not possible within the timeframe of my doctoral research. This section is therefore based on data obtained from the observations, interviews and conversations conducted with the following:

- trainee teachers and their professors at a teacher training college;
- English students who were either already teaching or about to teach in the state sector;
- inspectors at the primary and secondary levels;
- current English teachers;
- teachers in language schools who had been (or still are) in the state sector;
- workers in different sectors, regarding their experience of learning English at school.

Teachers' motivations for embarking upon the profession provide a starting point for exploring attitudes and language ideologies towards English that they have encountered and in turn might be sharing with their students. Teachers defined themselves and their relationship with English as having been a "good student", which increased their enjoyment of the subject and therefore their desire to continue studying or working with the language. A common theme across all of my participants was that they considered themselves as having been good at the subject at school. This feeling of aptitude had either directly fed into their motivation, or made them consider teaching as a viable option, as Ouarda explains here:

> ...when I started studying in high school I started having actually the best grades, moving from the worst student to the best one that was really really huge. So that really encouraged me, because I started liking it. (interview 07/03/17)

One entrant to a 2013 essay competition (see below) who worked as an English teacher expressed in strong terms the links between being a "good student" and wanting to teach:

> I started learning English at the age of 12 in the middle school. I quickly realized how much I loved the language, and how better I was than my classmates. So, I decided to become an English teacher after graduation. (essay 1)

Being 'better' or 'the best' is linked to enjoying the language and therefore considering a teaching career, and examples such as these reinforce the following ideas: 1) the objective of language learning is to be "good at it", 2) "mastery" is linked to school performance (in terms of grades and comparison with classmates especially), 3) teachers are the ones who are "better" and therefore like the language.

A positive feedback loop between high grades and liking the language was based on meeting "inspiring teachers". At the ENS, most trainee teachers mentioned that they had been inspired by one of their teachers or a sibling, who either kindled their love of the language or made them feel that they were good at it (group interviews 01/03/17 and 07/03/17; fieldnotes 03/11/15, 11/10/17). Similarly, Mouna, who now has set up and manages a network of language schools in the capital but used to be a "middle school" (ages 11-15) teacher for several years, explained her language learning journey as

follow:

> M: And then I went to school I learnt French, then we started English in the middle school where I dreamt of being an English teacher, because I loved my English teacher… who is… actually visited me here and helping me as well.
>
> C: Oh, lovely.
>
> M: Yes! So, well, I mean helping me with her nice words [laughs]. Ok, so let's say she really inspired me to become a teacher of English… (interview 07/02/17)

In the essays shortlisted for an English-language competition entitled "How English has changed my life" organised by the British Council and Anadarko in 2013 and subsequently published in Arabic-language daily Echorouk[7], nearly all entrants named one of their teachers as having been the ones who enabled English to "change their life". Although these essays represent a skewed selection of stories, they highlight themes which were reccurent in speaking to English graduates and trainee teachers.

> At the age of twelve I started my first real English lessons in the middle school and I was the best in my classroom, at the age of thirteen I had a new English teacher I had a great admiration for her she was my idol I wanted to be like her and speak English fluently like her and here I felt in love with this language and it became my obsession. (essay 9, female science student and teacher from Algiers)
>
> My teacher (…) in High School an exceptional woman with a divine talent in transmitting her English Ideas made me a fan of that latter. (essay 3, female teacher from Setif)
>
> My rising interest in English was largely triggered by one of my best teachers ever (…). Thus, when I got my baccalaureate, I needed no second thought in selecting my study field at the university to such an extent that I could not conceive of a branch of study other than English. (essay 5, male teacher from Constantine)
>
> My great love of the English language began at the age of eleven when my elder brother began studying the language in middle school. He was willing to share his studies with me and I became a zealous student. As I progressed to the highest grade, I was encouraged greatly by an inspiring supportive teacher. Because of her diligence and enthusiasm, I achieved top grades in the subject which further stimulated my love of English. (essay 2, female ex-haematology consultant and current English student and teacher, no location given)

While teachers might not be the only ones who inspire teachers to become interested in English, the importance of a positive role model (most often a teacher, but sometimes a family member) and the foregrounding of feelings of achievement contribute to present English learning and teaching as a personal quest towards "mastery". Success is described as deriving from inspiration, hard work (whether as 'obsession' or 'diligence and enthusiasm') and English represents a way for teachers to set themselves apart from their fellow classmates.

Some teachers stressed the importance of "giving back" to their community, and of the satisfaction they got out of seeing their students making progress as one of the motivating factors for choosing the

[7]While these essays were all published, they are currently not available online.

profession and remaining in it. In this particular extract, Bachra and Souad, two young teachers from Ouargla who were in their first year of teaching in "middle school", foregrounded the importance of sharing and not keeping English 'for yourself':

> CJ: So at the moment you're teaching and studying. What was the motivation behind teaching English?
>
> B: Teaching English, you know, if you love a language, you can just give more. Even if you're using it so if for example you're teaching a new word, and they use it, it makes you so happy.
>
> CJ: The motivation of seeing your students learn… How about you?
>
> S: I've never thought I'd be a teacher. My motivation is my… You have a lot to give to our community so please don't be stingy and don't be selfish and just learn it for yourself. And since then I started the idea of teaching, started working in my mind.
>
> CJ: Because you were volunteer teachers here during your master degree as well?
>
> S: Yeah I started teaching at the age of 19, started working Friday school and I loved the experience. That's why I continued. But then when I worked in public school, it's totally different. When you see the result of your work you feel proud you feel… you made something, but it's tiring. It's not what I expected, at all. (interview 15/03/17)

Similarly, some of the competition essays emphasised how wanting to excel at her job led her to consider teaching as simultaneaously sharing and developing herself:

> My first day in teaching was with a group of boys, I was swelling and talking to myself, am I a good teacher, would I be a better one? At that moment I took a decision and a promise to do all my best in this career and give all my time to my learners. I think I am a lucky teacher, I taught till now different kinds of students from the age of 12 to 60 (…). But I was teaching myself first new rules, principles and especially how to GIVE without thinking of taking back. (essay 3, female teacher from Setif)

While the hopes of trainee teachers do not always translate into realities (as Souad admits, 'it's not what I expected'), the discourses around teaching English as the logical outcome of one's abilities and the opportunity to better oneself are recurrent. More research would be necessary to analyse how teachers' understandings of their own motivations impact on how they talk about the language to their students.

Nonetheless, neither teaching nor English are always the first choice of these future and current teachers. It is important to note that even though gaining entry to an Ecole Normale Supérieure is considered prestigious (the relatively high baccalaureate averages required[8] are testament to this), not all students in those institutions want to become teachers or are even interested in English. As Saliha, who was a lecturer in the East of the country before moving to Algiers five years ago, wrily admitted to me one day at the end of the academic year that 'most of them they do not want the experience of teaching. They want a job. But students have to teach!' (interview on 07/06/17). Some have been

[8]Individual grades for each subject are aggregated into an average based on each subject's weighting, and it is this average which is used to grant or refuse access to different university pathways. The baccalaureate average required for each discipline varies year on year and is based on the number of students applying.

encouraged by their families as employment is guaranteed, or as teaching is considered an appropriate job for women from all backgrounds, with women making up 68% of all teachers in primary and secondary education (Assistance Technique Afrique du Nord, 2018, p. 33). Others did not obtain baccalaureate averages high enough to study other subjects such as medicine or sciences, and so chose English as "second best" (fieldnotes 15/12/16, 31/01/17). When Rim asked her fifth year students how many of them did not have English teaching as their first choice, nine students out of twenty-one raised their hands (fieldnotes 12/10/16). Considering that this was in a prestigious institution, in a formal setting, in front of their teacher and an external observer, it is possible to think that the numbers might be even higher. Similarly, during a teacher training conference in Oran, several teachers explained that as they lived away from the big cities, teaching was one of the only jobs available to them if they wanted to remain close to their families (fieldnotes 31/04/16, 01/05/16). Discourses around choosing English teaching by default are far removed from the enthusiastic responses found in the essay competition or expressed by the teachers above. For all the highlighting of positive narratives of English "changing lives" encouraged by international organisations, many teachers have made pragmatic decisions regarding their careers.

Once in post, teachers' main concerns are students' motivation and how to teach grammar effectively, reproducing discourses that emerged from their personal stories of English as a combination of inspiration and mastery. Teachers complained that, especially if they worked in rural or southern wilayat[9], their pupils were not interested in any language, whether that was English, French or Arabic (fieldnotes 30/04/16-01/15/16). Despite broader discourses of a surge of interest for English, especially amongst the "younger generation" (e.g. Mehenni, 2015), this did not appear within classrooms, where motivation and results remain low.

Teachers' language ideologies regarding what "English" is and how it should be taught also plays a role in who uses English and which discourses regarding the language are brought to the fore. The dominant language ideology remains a certain reverence for the "standard", with the aim of attaining "mastery". The concept of "mastery" especially was recurrent in how participants described their own practices, their goals and how they evaluated others. In a particular writing session at the ENS, the teacher was focusing on training students on how to peer-review, relating it both to a useful exercise to improve their writing and a possible teaching method for their future careers. Despite being asked to focus on content and structure and to offer feedback on ideas, arguments and examples, when walking around nearly all trainees made detailed comments on grammar and accuracy, and struggled to give feedback on content even when prompted (fieldnotes 12/10/16). During discussions after the task, several students expressed their confusion, as they often equated the quality of a piece of English writing with 'the absence of errors', and that learning English meant 'expressing oneself correctly'. Other teachers at the ENS echoed this view of teaching and learning, with the role of the classroom being to focus on accuracy and rules, and rectifying the damage which texting (for some) or lack of reading (for others) has wrought on the younger generation who 'don't know how to write or spell anymore'

[9]wilaya is an administrative division which can be translated as region, state or province. There are 48 wilayat, ranging in size from just under 1,500km2 (Algiers, Boumerdès, Annaba) to over 500,000km2 (Tamanghasset)

(fieldnotes 16/11/16). Teachers also see themselves as responsible for avoiding "interferences" brought about by pupils knowing other languages, as Saliha expresses in this particular interview:

> S: Indeed. I know if they read it would be…. maybe even if they make spelling mistakes, their expression would be better, their expression lacks words, their vocabulary is terre à terre comme on dit, it's not really very high standards… it's every day words that they're using… and the vocabulary is not rich. It tells you that they are not readers.
>
> CJ: And that's changing, that's a big change compared to ten years ago?
>
> S: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. When you really work with them, I remember even if our essays were not perfect they were not that much [indistinct]. And now it's a problem of expression, it's a problem of spelling, it's grammatical mistakes, people really are not making the effort of perfecting their English language. It's the reason that English is not or was not, for this category, it was not our…. first foreign language. French was first foreign language. English was considered as the second and so people… many students you feel when they write they write French words. So I draw with a red pen "this is a French word, it's not an English word". It's the interference of the French language. (interview 07/06/17)

Teacher trainers influence future generations of teachers, including in the beliefs they pass on to their students regarding what learning and using English means. English teaching and learning remains about decoding and learning a set of rules, with "mastery" (and underlying notions of "purity" through the avoidance of "interferences") as the objective. In this case, the focus of learning becomes strictly separating between bounded languages and avoiding "interferences", especially with French. Classroom studies show that while teachers rely on translanguaging in their practice, the discourses they hold to their students and to researchers underline theses practices as "deficient", a necessary evil to palliate earlier education failures, and an obstacle to reaching "true" mastery (Asselah-Rahal & Blanchet, 2007; Chachou & Stambouli, 2016). Teachers' concerns over "correctness" echo partly Mouna's statement (quoted at length in the following subsection), where she reminded me that Algerians are excellent language learners, therefore implying that anything less than "mastery" was both a personal failure and a result of a "faulty" education system.

Teachers' background, training, motivations and attitudes influence what is taught and how, and therefore play a crucial role in (re)producing the discourses about what English is and who learns and uses it which are analysed in chapters 4 and 5.

3.3.3 Policy on the ground: glottopolitique

The production and re-production of language policy and planning by non-state actors in the everyday has been conceptualised as glottopolitique (Blanchet, 2016, p. 33). As Guespin and Marcellesi explain, this term

> 'désigne les diverses approches qu'une société a de l'action sur le langage, qu'elle en soit ou non consciente : aussi bien la langue, quand la société légifère sur les statuts réciproques du français et des langues minoritaires par exemple; la parole, quand elle réprime tel

> emploi chez tel ou tel; le discours, quand l'école fait de la production de tel type de texte matière à examen: Glottopolitique est nécessaire pour englober tous les faits de langage où l'action de la société revêt la forme du politique'[10] (Guespin & Marcellesi, 1986, p. 5)

How different actors view the role of and interactions between teachers, schools and language policies, and what mechanisms allow for the daily (re)production and (re)enactment of language ideologies about language is thus explored in this section.

An example of the importance of considering the multiple layers of demands and views regarding language policy is the 2016 petition by one of the national associations of parents demanding an increased role for English in compulsory education, which newspapers reported as an attempt to replace French. The association's President Ali Benzina explained the aim of their petition in Echorouk, Algeria's bestselling daily Arabic-language tabloid (here on the French version of the website):

> Nous ne voulons pas bannir la langue française mais de la considérer comme une langue facultative au même titre que la langue anglaise. Ainsi, les élèves auront à choisir entre les deux langues.[11]

The petition reached nearly 10,000 signatures and also argued for a halt to the second wave of education reforms (from 2015-2016 onwards) due to teachers' lack of 'une éducation sérieuse'[12] (Slimani, 2016). So far, nothing has come of this petition, although it was occasionally mentioned by participants (fieldnotes 14/03/17, 29/08/17). National policies and pronouncements regarding the place of English are refracted not only through teachers' actions in the classroom but also through societal understandings of these policies, which impact on teachers, pupils and ultimately policy-makers as well.

Training and "expertise"

Engaging with processes of glottopolitique means understanding how discourses constrain, mediate and make sens of the relation between policy and practice. Discourses about English included concerns that English was not only "absent" but that this absence revealed a problem in linguistic and pedagogical competences. In this extract, Mouna, former "middle school" teacher and now manager of a language school and teacher trainer based in Algiers, explains at length why she saw the issue of training as key to understanding the "problem" with English skills in Algeria.

> CJ: What is the rationale, for you what is the reason why you want to focus on teacher training?
>
> M: Perfect, very good question. Here, it was a necessity. Why? Because people are good at

[10] refers to the various approaches to action on language that a society has, whether or not it is conscious: language, when society legislates on the reciprocal status of French and minority languages for example; speech, when it represses such use at this or that; discourse, when the school makes the production of such type of text subject to examination: "glottopolitique" is necessary to include all language discourses and practices where social action takes a political form

[11] We don't want to banish the French language but instead consider it as an optional language, like the English language. Thus, pupils would have to choose between the two languages

[12] a solid education

> the language, and in Algeria we have this problem, people are good, they are very good, they are excellent at languages, but…they are not like, to become teacher, they are not well prepared to become teachers. They can speak English very well, or French or any other language, but they are very bad at class. When I say very bad, it means they lack the principles of teaching. They really lack the principles of teaching. I say most of them, because I've been hiring teachers for a long time now, seventeen years, and we always have the same problem. So last year we decided, as we had the convenient venue for that, we decided to train the teachers and it really worked, we started it. We decided to train them first, we're not going to teach them the language but we're going to teach them how to teach. Some principles, you know at university now like you can see in l'ENS, we receive teachers from l'ENS but unfortunately when they get trained here they say it is different. There it's too theoretical. They say that we heard about motivation… ok?.. but how to teach, how to motivate our children. We learnt that we have different learning styles, but how to deal with those different styles. We learnt, or we heard about…let's say, they say that we heard about the children with difficulties, or with deficiency…but how to deal with those. So this is the problem, so here… we're trying to help them, we're trying to help them, if you want… how-to sessions in how to deal with this, how to teach children, how to deal with teenagers, they really lack how to treat children. (…) and for this reason we started training and now we launched a project which is the first in Algeria, which is called the TAC, which is the Teachers' Aptitudes Certificate. It is 120h training, that helps the teacher become ready to teach if you want. So this is meant for all people interested in starting a teaching career. So we always explain to them that knowing a language, speaking a language, doesn't mean teaching a language. So this is why we started from the need, we responded to this need by training the teachers and we have very good feedback, actually we launched this certificate and what is maybe special, it is not an international certificate, it is not an accredited certificate, but still it is local, Algerian, where many experts are participating and we have something is that people who have this certificate will be able to work in all our expansions (…). So those people will have the opportunity for employment as well. (interview 07/02/17)

In this extract several themes are intertwined, with English not as a exceptional example but instead revealing general concerns over the disconnect between theory and practice, between learning and teaching. There is a high demand for additional training, and in fact most teachers who attended her workshops were from outside Algiers. Mouna moves away from expertise as only "mastery" of the language and towards a definition which foregrounds the ability to share that knowledge. She describes Algerians as excellent language speakers, inhibited by poor teachers and lack of motivation. By underlining a supposed inherent language ability which is not always actualised by learners, teachers such as Mouna construct the main difference between those who speak English and those who do not as an individual question of motivation. Using English thus demonstrates a series of individual qualities which have led to developing language competence: English becomes a proof of one's character as well as a useful skill for employability (a way of ensuring 'opportunity for employment'). By

presenting the training scheme as valuable "despite" being local, Mouna also reinforces hierarchies of certifications, with "international" being the most valuable. Discourses around teacher training thus served to further construct English as indexing individual success, but also learning as more valuable when internationally accredited (see also subsection 5.4.2).

Teacher training programmes are also spaces where global discourses around "how to teach", international experts, and individual prestige are re-appropriated by teachers for their own context. When attending both national and local events focused on teacher training (such as the ELT Conference in Oran in May 2016 or a series of e-training at the American Cultural Centre in Algiers in June-July 2017), teachers came from dozens to sometimes hundreds of kilometres away in order to benefit from what they perceived as rare opportunities. Although in Mouna's experience teachers were interested in a local certificate from her school, internationally-accredited (or perceived as such) training is an extremely attractive addition to teachers' CV, even when it bears little relevance to the classroom. When facilitating discussions as part of a series of pedagogy e-seminars organised by the American Cultural Centre in Algiers, apart from the two students in their early twenties who were teaching in private schools, the other teachers all told me they were primarily interested in the additional certificate they could gain, rather than some supposed "insights" from the workshops. When I asked them about this, one of the teachers, who had over twenty years' experience in state schools, shrugged and replied that those principles were not applicable in their classrooms. Other teachers around the table nodded, and cited material conditions (large classes, lack of space to move around or lack of access to electronic resources) and different conceptions of teaching and learning as obstacles to even considering how to apply the pedagogical principles espoused in the webinars (fieldnotes 14/09/17, 26/09/17). Staff who work at the Centre corroborated this impression while discussing some of the strategies they have used to minimise the number of participants who attend only to obtain a certificate (interview with Hannah 06/09/17, fieldnotes 10/09/17). While teachers actively re-purposed attendance to these workshops for their own ends, this was seen as a "problem" by international organisations aiming to spread their "expertise".

Policies, practices and discourses of deficiency

Discrepancies between policy and practice are highlighted by international organisations as a fundamental problem to be solved and form a key part of their discourse of superior expertise. McIlwraith Education (2011, p. 4) laments that 'although staff are extremely diligent and thorough in conducting their work [...] there is disjointed communication between (and sometimes within) departments', with inspectors and teachers wishing to be more aware of the activities of the Groupe Spécialisé de Discipline (GSD) who draw up the national curriculum, provide pedagogical guidelines and select textbooks, an observation repeated in later reports (Wilson & Pulverness, 2014, p. 8).

In addition, inspectors are often in the difficult position of having to both evaluate and support their teachers, while only being able to see them infrequently (Wilson & Pulverness, 2014, pp. 8–10),

which diminishes opportunities for in-service training and non-punishing tracking of reform implementation. Research into the implementation of the education reforms started in 2003 and accelerated since 2008 shows that the vast majority of secondary school teachers were either not familiar with or did not understand the competency-based and learner-centred approach prescribed by the ministry (Benkheddoudja, 2008, p. 76). Possible justifications include that official exams only ever test for knowledge and content rather than abilities, and that teachers themselves had been trained in the 'traditional way' and often viewed it as more successful (Benkheddoudja, 2008, pp. 77–78). One reason for the differences between policy and practice and between and within wilayat lies with the apparent disconnect between the ministry and staff on the ground.

Discrepancies between policy and enactment are also visible in the unevenness of staffing provision, especially for language teachers. The inequality of resources between urban and rural centres, or between the more densely populated north and the sparse south, is intended to be alleviated by a national system of recruitment where teachers are sent to wherever they are needed most rather than being able to choose their posting, although the trainees graduating from the ENS get first choice of an assignment to their home wilaya. Despite these measures, there is a higher turnover rate and even teacher shortages in southern and rural wilayat (Alioua, 2016; Assistance Technique Afrique du Nord, 2018, p. 29). While this is not specific to English and is felt even more acutely in the case of Arabic and French language teachers, these shortages have meant that even within the same school, students might have received a wildly different number of hours of language tuition by the end of their compulsory schooling. Unequal staffing provision across the country intensifies disparities in students' attainment beyond those differences attributable to variation in personal motivation or ability, and decreases the chance of individual performance matching governmental expectations. In practice, staffing issues, drop-out rates and variation in personal motivation mean that curriculum objectives of being able to produce 25 sentences in response to a written or aural stimulus by all students at the end of "secondary school" (Ministère de l'Education Nationale, 2005, p. 4) are likely to be met only by a minority of the population, and that therefore exposure to English for the majority of the population is either minimal or from sources outside the education system.

The question of teacher training also exacerbates variations between policy and practice, and between classrooms. Teachers in the compulsory school system either obtained an English degree from a university or completed a four to five years training programme at one of the Ecoles Normales Supérieures (ENS). Managed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, there are eleven of such institutions across the Algerian territory, focusing on training teachers for the primary and secondary levels. Only a minority of secondary teachers receive comprehensive pre-service training in one of the the Ecoles Normales Supérieures (around one fifth of new recruits each year), while the vast majority are recruited directly after an English language degree (Assistance Technique Afrique du Nord, 2018, pp. 17–18). They might be given a few weeks of remedial training by their inspector in the summer before taking up their first post, but this is highly dependent on resources and can vary within the same city. Teachers who graduated from one of the ENSs will have had several weeks of classroom experience prior to starting their teaching career, and will have benefited from

smaller class sizes during their degrees (sixty students maximum). In comparison, those who have come from university are likely to have followed some didactics modules, but only a minority will also have had teaching experience. This teaching experience will have been either in higher education, if they taught undergraduates while completing their master's degree, or because they started teaching in private language schools while still studying.

The differences in recruitment and the lack of consistency or relevance of the pre-service training received by teachers is often decried as the reason for the "failure" of foreign language teaching (Iddou-Derraz, 2009). For interviewees, concerns over the gap between theoretical training and professional practice was a recurrent fear and complaint. For instance, Chakiba, who is now in her second year of teaching at a secondary school in the West of the country, remarked she had gone straight from university to the workplace and that she did not consider that she had received any training at all, a sentiment she later refined to having received 'none that was useful' because it had all been too focused on theory whereas she would have needed more practice (interview 05/12/17). Similarly, experienced teachers and teacher trainers complained that pre-service training is often too theoretical and does not prepare teachers for the reality of the classroom. Several ENS professors mentioned that their students learnt the keywords and could repeat definitions, but could not apply this knowledge to real-life situations (fieldnotes 12/10/16, 16/11/16, 29/01/17). Deficiency-focused discourses around teacher training are also seized upon by international organisations as a focus of cooperation and solution to "failures" of the education system (Assistance Technique Afrique du Nord, 2018; McIlwraith Education, 2011; Toualbi & Tawil, 2005).

Despite differences in teacher training and staffing provision, a great deal of consistency in terms of what "English" is and how it should be taught is achieved across the entire territory through the fact that teachers are reliant on and constrained by the official textbooks. Textbooks sometimes stand in place of other policy documents in guiding teachers' decisions regarding content and principles of teaching:

> There is a lack of connection between the principles of communicative language teaching and active learning as promoted in the main body of the syllabus and the prescriptive thrust of the application contained in the unit cycle and sample unit. It was clear from discussions with teachers that most were not in the habit of referring to the syllabus and that in practice the textbook is the syllabus: for example, yearly planning within each wilaya is based directly on the textbook. Indeed, if teachers were to refer to the syllabus, they would find a strong implicit identification between syllabus and textbook. Thus, when teachers were asked for their views on the syllabus, responses were confined to specific comments on the design and content of the textbooks, especially on the motivational appeal, or lack of it, in particular units. Hence the comments reported below are as much about the design and content of textbooks as they are about the syllabus' (Wilson and Pulverness, 2014, p. 14).

While in some wilayat, some inspectors encourage teachers to move away from the textbooks (interview with Chakiba 05/12/17), in others teachers feel that they cannot deviate from its activities

as students are required to buy the book and workbook (fieldnotes 01/04/16, 14/09/17), and some research indicates that young teachers are keener to supplement the textbook with their own resources (Messekher, 2014, pp. 80–82). Textbooks in state secondary schools are produced by a committee of Algerian experts appointed by the government, although cooperation documents indicate that foreign governments are keen to influence material designs (McIlwraith Education, 2011; Wilson & Pulverness, 2014). Cultural aspects are present throughout the "middle school" textbooks (ages 11-15), with references to the US slightly more numerous to those to the UK and Algeria, and a small number of cultural references to other African, Asian, Latin American or European countries (Messekher, 2014, p. 77). Nonetheless, these cultural aspects were mostly restricted to monuments, literary works or festivals, presenting a unitary and fixed view of "culture" and leading teachers to question its relevance for communication (Messekher, 2014, pp. 82–84). Policies are refracted through the conditions on the ground: the lack of teachers, differences in training and support, but also how the texbooks and examination materials structure teaching and are being read and used by teachers.

The overarching narratives of "problematic training" and "educational failures" are symptomatic of wider discourses of describing especially young people as "bilingual (or trilingual) illiterates", replicated and applied to the teaching and learning of English. The discourse of "multilingual illiterates" is not specific to Algeria but is repeatedly found across the Maghreb (Boutieri, 2016, p. 3). Translanguaging or transgressing of imagined language boundaries and supposed standards is equated to loss of linguistic proficiency and 'the absence of coherent thinking in all issues' (Dourari in an interview in El Watan, quoted in Dahou, 2016, p. 34). In the academic literature, this translates into research focusing on concepts of semilinguisme, demilinguisme or analphabétisme éclaté[13] (Chachou & Stambouli, 2016, p. 24). With English, "semilinguisme" is extended to an additional language, and multilingualism becomes equated to a reduced rather than expanded repertoire, closing doors rather than opening them. Highly exclusionary mechanisms (in this case operating along class and age lines) thus form an integral part of the glottopolitique of English in Algeria, in terms of how language policies are being reformulated and enacted in everyday life.

As everywhere in the world, the first contact with English is not straightforward and often fraught with contradictions. Students' interest for "English" does not translate into interest for the subject in the classroom. In fact, this interest seems only rarely acted upon, or even actively discouraged by teachers if seen as "inappropriate" (cf. chapter 5). For others, it is a combination of their own motivation to learn and obtaining good grades which spurs them on to further their language learning and eventually become a teacher. This virtuous but highly exclusionary circle hints at a language restricted to a small minority who see their efforts rewarded. For the vast majority, English in school is seen as irrelevant. As Hicheme, an undergraduate pharmacy student in Algiers relates: 'I have a lot of friends, I told them "don't wait until you finish your studies to learn English because you're going to regret it" And they said "no no I'm cool with that, I'm ok"' (interview 13/12/16). There is a disconnect between discourses of the obvious relevance and pervasiveness of English and students' actual perceptions and motivation. The appropriation of global discourses of the "international language" within the Alge-

[13]broken or split illiteracy

rian setting helps construct English speakers as an elite group, those who have already realised the importance of developing their skills, will not 'regret it' and fulfilled their potential as 'excellent at languages'. The discourses of self-development, achievement and mastery, as well as being a language learning indexing being part of a separate group, are found again beyond the initial encounters within the education system, and will be investigated further in this chapter as well as chapter 5.

3.4 Higher education: learning within and without the classroom walls

3.4.1 English departments

English departments play a major role in defining what is English, who can learn and appropriate it and how. The majority of teachers in both private language schools and state schools are recent English graduates or current language students, and in most universities part of the course content is geared towards theories of learning and teaching. Professionals working as translators, interpreters or the limited number of customer-facing roles which require English have nearly all completed their studies within one of these departments. Recruitment into this discipline is conditioned both by previous academic record and future plans for employment, and in turns impact the wider language ideologies around English. To understand the discourses and practices around English, it is therefore important to explore the experience of those who have been trained to use the language.

Universities in Algeria are generally large and continually expanding as part of the massification of higher education. The University of Algiers had over 100,000 students in 2007, and total number of students in higher education was expected to reach over 2,000,000 in 2017, from 423,000 in 1999 (Rose, 2014, p. 24). The rapid increase in enrolment has led consultancies and some academics to criticise the pressure this put on teachers, who some consider "under-qualified, underpaid and over-stretched" (Rose, 2014, p. 24). In 2014, only 28% of staff teaching in higher education institutions held a doctorate (Rose, 2014, p. 23), and upgrading qualifications was identified by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MHESR) as a priority as part of the ongoing cycle of educational reforms initiated in 2003. The content and focus of education reforms have been a key site of international funding, from UNESCO to individual governments (Gouvernement de la République Algérienne, 2013; Toualbi & Tawil, 2005). For example, the 2013 Work Programme between the UK and Algeria included funding up to 300 students to complete their doctoral study in the UK and later to return as university lecturers for a minimum duration of six years. Having obtained a PhD, especially from a European or North American country, was considered key in improving the quality of higher education (fieldnotes 02-03/11/15, 19/10/16, 12/07/18). During my visits to the universities in Ouargla, El Oued and Tlemcen, older members of staff generally held Magister degrees[14] but only rarely PhDs. Several lecturers

[14]Magister degrees were 3 year postgraduate research degrees including a one-year taught element and two years (often extended to three or more) dedicated to a research project, examined by the submission of a small thesis and a viva. Although

in other departments (especially Physics, Mathematics and Engineering) had obtained doctorates in English-speaking countries or completed at least part of their doctoral training abroad thanks to government scholarships, but this was extremely rare in English departments, where the vast majority of staff had only ever been to majority English-speaking countries on holiday, if at all. At the universities of Ouargla and El Oued, most master's degree level students also taught undergraduate courses, especially skills-based modules such as writing and speaking (fieldnotes 18-19/09/17, 5-13/12/17). Classes tend to be large, although attendance varies greatly, and absenteeism and drop-out rates are a concern both to faculty and the Ministry (fieldnotes 19-20/10/16, 19/09/17).

Who learns English?

Increasing numbers of students choose to study English, which is proving more popular than other languages in the last decade (interview with Tahar, Head of Department, 13/12/17; fieldnotes 18-19/09/17). The vast majority of these students are women. For Issa, a Sociolinguistics teacher in a prestigious university, it was because 'girls are more interested and get better results, look at the scholarship students to the UK, they're all girls, last year all those accepted for the doctoral contest were girls", although he later pointed out that sociolinguistics was an exception, as two out of the three current PhD students in this discipline are male. He bemoaned the fact that 'boys don't do anything at home, and then they're outside all the time. They don't work hard, not a home, not at university. They're not motivated because there are no jobs at the end'. His colleague Salma agreed, but for her this was an example of 'a reaction by women showing that they can succeed in society as a whole', which is why they work harder (conversations 05-06/12/17). Although Helima, who teaches at the university in El Oued, stressed that languages are more attractive to women because 'girls who speak French and English it's more prestigious rather than maths' (group interview with the English department 19/09/17), the complaints against supposedly lazy male students as opposed to industrious girls is a common trope across all disciplines, but could also be correlated to the fact that more women than men see teaching as a post-study employment opportunity.

Gender was not a prominent category for participants, and the idea of gender being the driving force behind different relationships to English was not found in other spaces. In fact, the gender discourse was mostly related to work ethics in schools rather than language per se, and was not replicated by the students themselves, or by professionals.

For teaching staff at the University of Tlemcen, the 'orientation towards Applied Linguistics and didactics' in their institution reflected 'the influence of the economic sector' because the only possible work for their graduates was teaching (group interviews 05-06/12/17). According to them, it was rare to find other positions in the wilaya as there were only a few openings in translation and interpreting, and teaching is seen as a career which gave the opportunity to continue practising English for those

they have been replaced by 2-year Master's degree under the LMD reforms, they probably most closely ressemble combined MA and MPhil degrees

who enjoyed the language: 'students have the idea that "if I don't use my English to teach, I won't use it for anything else" as the classroom is the only environment where it's used'. Meriem, Head of Professional Development at a state-owned company, presented her career choices in a similar way:

> CJ: Je me demandais, puisque vous me disiez que vous étiez contente d'avoir pu garder votre anglais. Vous pourriez m'en dire plus sur votre parcours avec l'anglais?
>
> M: Oui. Avec l'anglais, voilà, parce que je voulais évidemment connaître d'autres horizons, me développer, et tout, donc j'avais aussi cette crainte… j'ai même raté des occasions où je pouvais avancer, mais avec des promotions et tout, mais… j'avais peur de ne pas avoir à travailler avec mon anglais, donc j'ai dû renoncer à cela. Et ne pas évoluer sur le plan carrière comme je le voulais.
>
> CJ: Donc pour vous c'était vraiment important de garder l'anglais?
>
> M: Oui, vraiment important, je ne voulais vraiment pas le perdre.[15] (interview 23/02/17)

Although she was very keen to keep using her language skills professionally and despite meeting her first in an English-speaking space, she chose to have our discussions and interviews in French. Her choice hints both at how the professional and communicative values of English might not be equivalent, including in terms of its symbolic value, but also of how the English-speaker/French-speaker dichotomy (explored in chapters 1 and 5) is more complex than the straightforward expression of a political binary.

Motivation for studying English is not straightforwardly equated to gender or to hopes of finding a job. Although undergraduate students generally come from the local area, PhD students are chosen through a national contest and therefore can come from all over the country, which can sometimes be problematic both for students living far away who receive very little support, and for students who find themselves uprooted (fieldnotes 07/06/17, 19/09/17, 05/12/17). In addition, students frequently change courses as they seek to maximise their chances of employment or their receipt of state support[16] (Rose, 2014, p. 23) or simply try to find something which would interest them as they receive no career or personal advice in secondary school (informal conversations with management and career counsellors from universities in the East, West and Centre during a meeting in Algiers 19-20/10/16).

[15] CJ: I was wondering, as you were telling me you were glad to have been able to keep your English. Could you tell me more about your journey with English?

M: Yes. With English, you see, because I obviously wanted to know other horizons, develop myself, and everything, so I also had this worry… I even missed out on some opportunities where I could have gotten ahead, gotten promoted and all, but… I was worried I wouldn't have to work with my English, so I had to give up on that. And not progress career-wise the way I wanted to.

CJ: So for you it was really important to keep English?

M: Yes, very important, I really didn't want to lose it.

[16] Students are entitled to free housing in student residences and have access to heavily subsidised canteens for the duration of their studies.

What is English?

While for some the choice of English was guided by a hope for future employment, for others like Meriem or Saliha, their studies in English departments represent a time of personal and intellectual blossoming, and the beginning of a journey with English which determined their professional path. "English" is presented as a trophy, something which has been hard won and must be used and maintained, either for personal enjoyment or for prestige. Depending on the expertise available at the university, modules in Literature and Civilisation are offered as well as aspects of Applied Linguistics such as Didactics (theory of teaching). For some students, the opening of "English" to new topics beyond grammar and phonetics is a revelation, such as for Saliha, who studied and later taught in the East but moved to Algiers to teach Literature a few years ago:

> I remember when I was little I didn't know… We have courses with English before, we have the contact with English and it was very… interesting. Because we had some books of England, that were presenting England, London, Madame Tussauds, etc. It was very interesting for me but the memories that I keep best are in the university! At 18, I got my baccalauréat at 18 years old, at 19 we started the first year of English language finally, and that was a very good experience for me! (…) What we were studying in middle school or in high school was just grammar, verbs, tenses, phonetics or pronunciation, that's it. So when we started literature and civilisation, that is at the university when we specialise. Before we specialise, it's only about grammar, spelling, phonetics, this is what we see before. Almost no civilisation or literature. Though we were presented sometimes to the English culture and to… some place in England, etc., in the book we had, but our introduction to the English culture really was when we began studying the English civilisation or the British civilisation, British history, from the Celts…the kings of Britain. Then we saw a little bit of the history of America, the discovery of the new world, the colonisation of the thirteen colonies, it's there where we began to really see what it American culture, what is British culture, because we are seeing two facets, American English, British English. But before, it was all about knowing English grammar, knowing the tenses…phonetics, lots of phonetics, spellings, vocabulary… (interview 07/06/17)

"English" through the formal education system becomes equated with British and American "standards" which have to be learnt and "mastered", sometimes expanded to their respective literary canons and historical narratives as embodiments of "civilisation". Although most departments (including in ENSs) also teach African and African American literature as part of their curriculum, none of the students I encountered mentioned black authors when asked about what they were studying and which literary works they had enjoyed (fieldnotes 16/11/16, 14/01/17, 14/03/17, 11/12/17). Intellectual discovery of the cultural aspects of language reinforce discourses of what counts as "English" and who gets to be a writer/speaker in "English" as closely related to 'really seeing' the 'two facets' of English: British and American. This particular aspect of glottopolitique and its underlying language ideologies regarding native speakers and race is further explored in chapter 4.

Large classes, staff considered as "under-qualified", high drop-out and transfer rates as well as language assessment in secondary schools have had an impact on the content of English degrees delivered by English departments (as opposed to the certifications delivered by language centres, sometimes also hosted within universities). There are no Listening or Speaking components to the baccalaureate examinations and students are generally weaker in these domains compared to compared to Reading and Writing. Undergraduate degrees include modules covering the four skills, with the productive skills often taught as separate modules. Nonetheless, teaching within English departments has also been criticised as overly theoretical and detached from the needs of the job market, with the material conditions offering few opportunities for actual language use. For Ouarda and Abderrahmane, who are both language teachers in the capital now but graduated from two different universities, the formal teaching they received as part of their degree helped them acquire the basics of the language only, but those who actually wanted to be able to use the language 'have to do it [themselves], alone':

> O: At the university I practically didn't learn anything to be honest. I have learnt only grammar, I can make a sentence, but how to speak, how to pronounce, how to articulate, that was all thanks to the internet.
>
> A: Yeah, especially the education system here doesn't allow us to… For example if you go to the amphitheatre, you can't… the teacher can't correct your mistakes because there are two hundred students in the amphitheatre, even in the classroom the minimum is forty students, so it's impossible to focus on all the students. So if you want to build yourself in a language you have to do it yourself, alone.
>
> CJ: So was it the same for English?
>
> A: the same, yeah. You just attend the classes, you have the keys to the language, you have to work alone, you watch movies, you listen to music, you communicate after class, and that's it. Yeah.
>
> CJ: So most of your learning is outside…outside the classroom?
>
> A: Yeah.
>
> O: Most of it. (interview 07/03/17)

Teachers and English graduate themselves reproduce discourses of "English" as equated to supposed native speakers's production in movies and music. Even though though native speakers are not explicitly mentioned in this particular extract, the idea that the real learning happened 'outside' and entailed 'how to speak, how to pronounce, how to articulate' discounts formal learning and the input of their Algerian teachers.

Similarly, although Meriem was keen to maintain the links with the English language that she had acquired through her degree, when I asked her about her first contact with the language, she discounted her formal learning experience:

> CJ: Parce que vous avez…vous vous rappelez de votre premier contact avec la langue anglaise?
>
> M: Oui, c'était un américain, c'était pas facile parce qu'il avait un accent… (rires) C'était un Texan, avec son chapeau de cowboy, c'était… ça a été difficile la première fois, donc je

> lui ai demandé de parler plus lentement, donc j'ai pu… oui c'était mon premier contact, c'était avec un Texan.
>
> CJ: D'accord. Et c'était déjà au niveau professionnel, c'était à l'école?
>
> M: Non non, c'était ici, donc au niveau professionnel, j'ai dû interpréter, c'était une réunion de finances.[17] (interview 23/02/17)

What Meriem's response exemplifies, is how "English" becomes constructed through concepts of foreign-ness, tourism, employment and "native speakers", while encounters with English in Algeria are erased, a process which repeats itself in perceptions of the semiotic landscape (cf. subsection 4.3.1).

English Departments play an important roles in shaping discourses and practices about English as they form the background of most teachers and many professionals who subsequently use the language. Students' motivations and narratives of what counts as English, as well as broader discourses of the successes and failures of the higher education system, help to construct English as rare, foreign, and associated with social mobility and prestige. English departments are key spaces where discourses of English are produced, both through teaching and through research, and contribute to the cultural and social connotations associated to the language.

3.4.2 English for Specific Purposes

English competence or contact with English within Algerian higher education are not restricted to language departments. Global discourses around the importance of English as an international language have played a role in the increase in the number of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses being delivered to non-language students at universities across Algeria, in departments ranging from law to engineering. It is now a requirement for both PhD students and lecturers who want to progress to professorship to publish in international journals, which for many disciplines means publishing in English. As "access to knowledge" is a key consideration in the government's policy documents regarding the teaching of English, it is unsurprising to find a push for ESP in higher education. Increased ESP provision also means that anyone who has been through higher education is now supposed to have some command of English and contributes to enhancing the importance of the language in the professional sphere.

Nonetheless, this does not mean that the presence of English in higher education outside of English departments is "new". The Institut de Génie Electrique et Electronique (commonly referred to by its former name INELEC, or Institut National d'Electronique et d'Electrique) is a prestigious English-medium higher education institution specialising in engineering and electronics. It was established

[17] CJ: Because you have…you remember your first contact with the English language?

M: Yes, it was an American, it wasn't easy because he had an accent… (laughs) He was a Texan, with his Stetson, it was… it was difficult the first time, so I asked him to speak more slowly, so I could… yes it was my first contact, it was with a Texan.

CJ: Ok. And it was already at the professional level, it was at school?

M: No no, it was here, so at the professional level, I was interpreting, it was a finance meeting.

in 1976 in partnership with a consortium of American universities, and English has remained the language of instruction ever since. Many bursaries to English-speaking countries were available in the 1970s and early 1980s, especially in the sciences, leading to many older members of staff at universities having completed part of their studies or placements abroad. What is changing are the criteria for doctoral submissions and academic staff's promotion applications, which now include publications in international peer-reviewed journals as well as participation in international conferences.

English for Specific Purposes is often defined as a practitioners' movements and a 'conflation of research and pedagogical practice' (Johns, 2013, p. 6). It is mostly focused on the concept of needs analysis and adapting teaching to a professional and academic context. As Belcher (2009, p. 3) states, 'ESP specialists accept the responsibility for finding out what their learners will likely need (and want) to be able to read, write, speak and comprehend as listeners to achieve their goals'. This seemingly pragmatic approach has nonetheless been criticised as "assimilationist", in the sense of encouraging students towards native speakerism rather than critical thinking, and being driven by the lucrative needs of the worldwide ELT industry and its self-promotion, especially as the British Council is one of the key material publishers (Gollin-Kies et al., 2015; Johns, 2013, pp. 8, 36).

There does not appear to be any national guidelines on ESP in Algeria, whether in terms of objectives, curriculum or number of hours. The large-scale higher education reforms have meant that many undergraduate and postgraduate degrees have seen dramatic changes in the content and format of modules being taught. Each degree needs to be individually approved by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and the recent changes in requirements for promotion and doctoral graduation have prompted some departments to include an ESP module or (in rare occasions) entire modules in English at the bachelor's and master's level (fieldnotes 25/09/17, 10-12/12/17). Due to these fluctuations, it is difficult to make any generalisation regarding ESP provision plans in universities.

Furthermore, there is a wide wide variation in the content of these modules. Some students report mostly working from list of technical vocabulary, others as methodically making their way through an international textbook. One teacher explained that she was simply teaching "general English" as this is what the students needed. This variation in teaching and learning content and approach is partly due to teachers' varying trajectories: very few are subject specialists of the discipline, most of them are English graduates or current postgraduate students. One of the Mathematics departments I visited was an exception in that some of the Maths teachers had later specialised in teaching Maths in English.

In addition, extensive fieldwork research would be necessary in order to understand who is being taught what, for how long and at what stage of their studies. Observations and interviews with teachers and students at Tlemcen University and at a science-specialist university in Algiers show large variations not only between disciplines, but also year-on-year and between students of the same cohort. Recruitment difficulties and budgetary restrictions mean that teaching staff who go on maternity leave or retire are not always replaced. In addition, when asked to describe the English teaching they are received throughout their tertiary education, even students from the same programmes do

not always give consistent answers (fieldnotes 25/09/17, 28/09/17, 10-13/12/17).

A recurrent complaint is the lack of consideration of English teachers in some departments. They are not seen as belonging to the department or being "as legitimate" as other lecturers, are not always invited to teachers' days or consulted on issues relating to the cohorts they work with (fieldnotes 25/09/17, 28/09/17, 10-13/12/17). The potential lack of legitimacy of ESP teachers vis-à-vis their colleagues and the wider university also impacts on students' attitudes towards these sessions. In the lessons I attended and from teachers' and students' feedback, attendance fluctuated greatly and often remained low. The reasons invoked by their peers and their teachers was that most students chose to focus on their core modules for revision, echoing Hicheme's experience of his friends not seeing the relevance of English while they were at school or at university.

Discrepancies between discourses of English as important and the realities of the classroom can be grasped through two selected examples. At Tlemcen university, where ESP provision is extensive thanks to their research expertise in this domain, students on one of the academic apprenticeships commented when I observed their lesson that even though the majority of them were interested in being able to speak English and they saw it as 'important' in general terms, they did not see it as a priority and found it too difficult (fieldnotes 13/10/17). At another university, one lecturer explained that he had tried to teach part of a module in English instead of French, but that too many of his students were uncomfortable with the language for him to teach effectively, and that a minority had even launched a formal complaint procedure against it (fieldnotes 24/05/17). Despite global discourses of English as "the international language" and policy emphasis on English as the language of access and success, the relevance and attainability of these messages are not felt equally by all students.

Nonetheless, a small minority of students are not only assiduous, but in fact demanding more contact hours and more resources. In one of the universities in the Sahara for instance, engineering students requested a meeting with the Head of Undergraduate Studies to request that their programme be switched to English. Their rationale was that they would be working in the gas fields or in the headquarters of extractive multinationals located fewer than 100km away, and would therefore require English, but had instead been studying in Arabic and then in French (fieldnotes 14-15/03/17). Concerns relative to the language of study being distinct from the language of work are also found among hydrocarbon-related graduates from Algiers and Boumerdès, and point to the oil and gas sector as a key driver for demand for English in the country. Interest in ESP is thus not uniform but highly dependent on existing language skills within the cohort as well as future employment possibilities for each discipline.

In sum, even though in theory all higher education students should have received at least some additional contact with English after their compulsory schooling, there is no consistency in length or format of ESP provision. While there are additional incentives to learn or use English for graduation, publication or promotion, this does not mean that having journeyed through higher education can be equated to any particular standards or experience with the language. Claims of "language shift" are

more complex than a straightforward replacement of French by English, and point to the importance of individual motivations as well as structural factors such as the existence of provision and specialist teachers.

3.4.3 Clubs and student spaces

Students are particularly active in setting up English-language spaces, whether regular (weekly English language club or AIESEC meetings[18]) or transient (TEDx conferences[19]). These spaces engage both a wider (in terms of discipline) and narrower (in terms of motivation) set of students than formal learning, and cultivate different discourses and practices of English. The vast majority of my participants passed through these spaces while at university and they are therefore crucial in understanding who learns and uses English.

In all higher education institutions observed, whether teacher training-focused, humanities campuses or science and technology specialists, students had set up English clubs which operated on the university premises. The exact description and purpose of these clubs varied, but their overarching aim was always to provide an English-speaking space. For instance, in their first meeting of the year, the organising committee of one these clubs in Algiers described their aim as providing a variety of activities in English (fieldnotes 30/01/17), while a club based on a sciences campus introduced their bi-weekly meetings as 'an open space for students to freely practice their language and meet up with other students from different backgrounds' (fieldnotes 17/09/18). Groups often emphasise both the personal (skills development) and social aspects of their meetings and activities (see Figure 3.14).

Other important English-language spaces in universities include local branches of national or international organisations such as AIESEC or World Learning. The latter has funded a small number of university-based career centres across the country, which despite their avowed emphasis on employability also represent spaces where students can hear and speak English (fieldnotes 30/01/17, 13/03/17). The recurrent message from these clubs is their focus on providing a space for practice, and the relative absence of English outside of these spaces. For instance, Wassim, president of one of the AIESEC branches, presented his experience with the organisation as 'you learn a lot, that's the purpose of AIESEC', explained that he had been attracted to it as a way to improve his English, and in a meeting reminded his colleagues that they should conduct it entirely in English as it was a rare opportunity to practise (fieldnotes 27/05/17 and 31/05/17). Djallil, currently working in marketing and a previous AIESEC member, highlighted the importance of these para-tertiary spaces for exposure and practice: 'for most of my co-members, when I used to be a member, it was their opportunity to practise the

[18] AIESEC is a youth-run organisation with local chapters in 126 countries. The organisation's aims are to develop young people's leadership capabilities and foster cross-cultural understanding through international exchanges and support for setting up social engagement projects (AIESEC, n.d.)

[19] TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) aims to deliver 'short, powerful talks' and a space for learning and ideas. It refers to series of conferences promoted until the label across the globe, to the short talks delivered as part of these events and later made available online, and to the 'global community' they aim to create. (TED, n.d.)

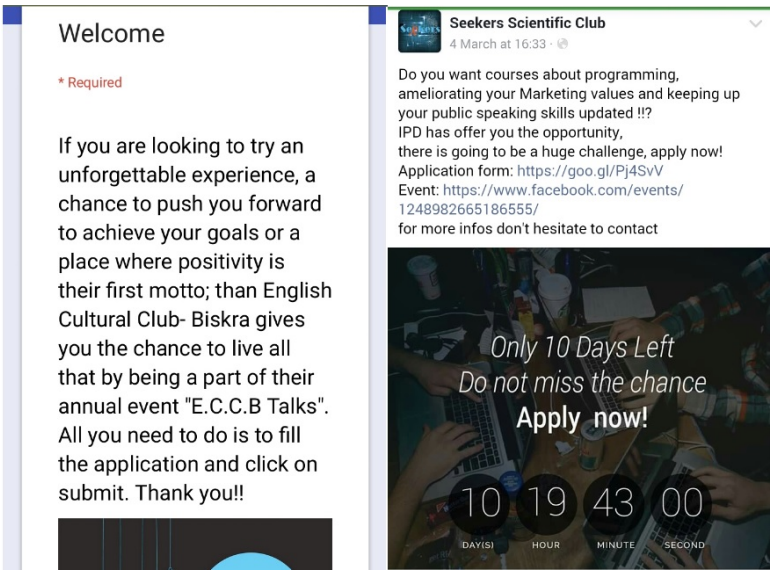

Figure 3.14: Advertising of events organised by English clubs in the universities in Biskra (North-East, "the door to the desert") and Médéa (south of Algiers) (February and March 2017)

language. Where we all got together and spoke' (interview 05/09/17). "English" is present in higher education institutions not only in English departments but more actively in student-led spaces where English is both the aim and the means.

The organisation of English-language events under the TEDx or WikiStage trademarks has become an important rite of passage in the life of a student association. The first Algerian TEDx took place in 2010, and since then the number of such conferences has been growing each year (TED, n.d.). The overwhelming majority is organised by students, most of the time through AIESEC or English-language clubs. For instance, Nassim, one of the co-founders of the English club at a science-focused university, explained that as he was in the final year of his master's degree, his aim was to hold a TEDx on campus before he left. For him this would both look good on his CV and ensure his legacy at the university as he would have been the first to do so (fieldnotes 28/09/17). The organisation of such events are prestigious not only because of their large scale (100-200 attendees) and potential for demonstrating skills of interest to recruiters, but also because their links with the English language make them more "international" and therefore more desirable than national events. Feryel (a languages teacher and community organiser in Southern Algeria) underlined the importance of using English as a sign of prestige rather than a straightforward communication need in her discussion of a magazine which included several articles in English:

> Parce que nous on considère l'anglais c'est high level. Donc si on trouve un article en anglais, wow, ils ont fait des efforts. (...) C'est un niveau supérieur quand tu parles en anglais...[20] (interview 15/03/17).

Even though the events themselves are multilingual, the fact that they are advertised through English helps to index prestige and insertion within global networks (cf. chapter 4). Universities offer

[20]Because for us we consider that English it's *high level.* So if we find an article in English, wow, they've made an effort. (...) It's a superior level when you speak in English...

a space for students to demonstrate and promote their achievements through the organisation of and participation in English-language events.

English-language clubs and events also sometimes straddle spaces within and outside the strict confines of the university. While present on campus, most AIESEC branches also focus on setting up exchange programmes abroad for their members, as well as one or two large annual projects, often a summer school for children from disadvantaged areas. Similarly, World Learning not only engages with students directly at higher education institutions but also through local projects linked to private schools or the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) Centre, opened in April 2016 in its central offices in Algiers and which holds weekly talks and workshops. These additional opportunities are highly dependent on location, with all of these initiatives taking place in urban areas. Students in Algiers and neighbouring cities such as Blida and Boumerdès also regularly gathered in English-speaking spaces in the capital, such as the American Cultural Centre in Algiers (ACCA) (fieldnotes 08/11/16, 15/12/16, 31/05/17, 10/09/17). While open to all interested in language and culture, in practice most attendees are students, and all the volunteers who lead weekly workshops or English lessons are in higher education or very recently graduated (interview with Hannah, who works at the centre, 06/09/17). There is an overlap between university and corporate spaces, online and offline spaces, with individuals involved in one type of space also often take part in activities in others, with "English" as the common element bringing students from different backgrounds and disciplines together.

Not all students are equally involved in those initiatives, and teachers and staff involved in English-language activities commented on levels of interest and competencies varying depending on the academic background of young people. In Ouargla, workshop facilitators and teachers who worked across campuses noted that students from the Sciences and especially Engineering faculties were much more proactive in seeking opportunities to speak and hear English, compared to students of Law and Social Sciences (fieldnotes 13-15/03/17). This feeling was echoed by Wassim, who is the president of an AIESEC branch and actively sought to recruit new members across faculties and campuses, as well as Ayoub, a postgraduate English student at a university in Western Algeria and active events organiser (interviews 04/06/17 and 04/12/17). The latter explained that while there are many English clubs on campus, they are mostly managed and attended by English students. For him the differences between disciplines reflected the differences in academic level inherent to recruitment:

> because you only need 10[21] to get into Arabic, so students are no really motivated and not interested because they know there will be no jobs afterwards (interview 04/12/17).

Students with higher baccalaureate averages, in more prestigious disciplines (mostly taught in French) and often with already better employment opportunities, are considered more proactive and more present in English-language spaces. Therefore, while a wider range of students were involved than just those studying English, individual factors such as previous academic achievement and prestige influence motivation and interest towards the language. Again, discourses around English-language spaces paint the individuals who patronise them as more driven and successful, emphasise links to

[21] 10/20 baccalaureate average

access to knowledge, personal development and employability, and question the idea of English as the preserve of "Arabophones" (cf. subsection 4.2.3).

The combination of ESP provision and presence of English-language spaces around universities indicates that in theory, all graduates should have had prolonged contact with English and that therefore the language could be part of their linguistic repertoire. In practice, this is the case mostly for an interested and self-motivated minority, who can be found in English departments but also in science faculties, especially in fields seen as linked to oil and gas. The realities of the education system mean that, as anywhere, independent learning plays an important role, even for language graduates.

3.5 Visible and invisible independent learning

3.5.1 Language schools

The most visible sign of interest for learning English is the number of language schools across the country, which has multiplied exponentially since the early 2000s. Algiers-based language teacher Tarik called it an 'effervescence' (interview 08/07/17) and for Meriem, who works for a national company, this trend was highly visible and an important indicator of increased interest for learning English:

> CJ: Et ça c'est un changement depuis les dix dernières années?
>
> M: Oui, vous remarquerez qu'au niveau, à Alger centre notamment, toutes ces écoles qui ouvrent un peu partout. C'est un indicateur.[22] (interview 23/02/17)

This section thus provides a sense of who attends and who teachers, where the schools are located, what they teach and what the priorities of teachers and students are. It is based on observations and interviews with managers, teachers and students in Algiers, Ouargla and Tlemcen.

Who teaches?

While the majority are located in cities, language schools can now be found in rural areas as well, although the competition is fiercer in smaller towns due to the reduced number of potential students and wealth disparities. Instead, the schools located in big cities also attracted people living up to 100 kilometres away (interview with Mouna, a language school manager in the suburbs of Algiers, on 07/02/17; fieldnotes 02-03/11/15). In this extract, Amina, who also manages a school in Algiers, draws on her professional experience to explain the dynamics between rural and urban areas and how English provision is developing in both settings:

> Par rapport à d'autres grandes villes… si je prenais l'exemple d'Oran, je pense que la dynamique est pratiquement la même, il y a un intérêt pour les langues étrangères, il y a un intérêt de certains enseignants et des gens qui ont les moyens, ils ouvrent des écoles.

[22] CJ: And that's a change in the last ten years?

M: Yes, you'll notice that in the centre of Algiers for instance, all these schools opening everywhere. It's an indicator.

> (…) Je sais qu'à Oran il y a beaucoup d'écoles, il y a beaucoup d'intérêt pour la langue anglaise, je pense qu'à Constantine aussi. D'ailleurs certaines écoles (…) qui existent au moins depuis une dizaine d'années, ont fini par ouvrir d'autres annexes, à Oran et à Constantine. (…) Maintenant par rapport aux petites villes, je pense que c'est en train de venir. Parce que déjà, à Sétif par exemple il y a un centre de langues qui non seulement a ouvert, et ça c'est important, mais a demandé l'accréditation et a obtenu l'accréditation de Cambridge. Il y a une école (…) à Chlef, ça s'appelle Palace of Languages, je pense qu'ils font d'autres langues mais ils se sont intéressés à notre établissement, ils sont venus, ils nous ont contacté, (…) et juste après on a reçu, c'est un petit peu la compétition, un autre message d'une autre école qui se prétend la plus importante à Chlef, ce qui n'est pas le cas peut-être puisque l'autre prétend la même chose et dit la même chose "nous sommes assez importants pour attirer votre attention, nous voudrions faire… un genre de partenariat, ou bénéficier de votre expertise, dans la matière". Donc Chlef c'est une petite ville. (…) Je pense que dans les petites villes aussi en Algérie, il y a ou il doit y avoir… il va y avoir de plus en plus [indistinct] important pour l'ouverture des écoles de langues.[23] (interview 12/02/17)

What this particular quote illustrates is the convergence of several reccurent themes which show an increasing popularity and visibility of the business of teaching and learning English. Firstly, existing schools open subsidiaries in other parts of the city or in other cities altogether, building on their existing reputation, practical knowledge and logistics. Secondarly, larger urban areas are the first to see this increase, which then slowly reaches smaller towns. Thirdly, schools make grand claims in a bid to market themselves to potential customers and to attract the attention and support of established teaching institutions. Fourthly, links to the Inner Circle countries, especially through formal accreditation of courses or teacher training, confer prestige and is equated to quality.

Language schools are seen as fulfilling a need for teaching and certification provision, and all managers proudly pointed to the fact that their classes were oversubscribed as a testament to the "thirst for English". Nonetheless, some schools are also derided for being only "money-making initiatives", reaping the monetary rewards of their relative scarcity and novelty without providing their students with quality learning opportunities (interviews with language school teachers and managers 07/02/17,

[23] Compared to other big cities… if I took the example of Oran, I think the dynamics is practically the same, there is a lot of interest for foreign languages, some teachers and people who have the financial means, they are interested, they open schools. (…) I know that in Oran there are many schools, there is a lot of interest for the English language, I think in Constantine as well. In fact some schools which have been there for at least a decade, they've ended up also opening other schools, in Oran and in Constantine. (…) So compared to smaller towns, I think it's coming. Because already, in Sétif for instance there is a language centre which has obtained the Cambridge accreditation. There's a school in Chlef, it's called Palace of Languages, I think they also teach other languages but they got interested in our institution, they came, they contacted us, (…) and straight after we got, it's a bit of a competition, another message from another school which also pretended to be the most important in Chlef, which maybe isn't the case since the other one pretended the same thing and says the same thing "we are important enough to draw your attention, we would like to set up… a type of partnership, or benefit from your expertise in this matter". So Chlef it's a smaller town. (…) I think in smaller towns in Algeria as well, there is or there must be… There will be more and more [indistinct] important for the opening of language schools.

14/03/17, 07/06/17, 08/07/17; fieldnotes 02-03/11/15). Criticisms of some schools as "cashing in" on the global discourses around the importance of English whereas others are applauded as responding to a need for English magnifies the idea that some spaces (and by extension their learners) are more legitimate than others, and that legitimacy is in part derived from international links and having been there first.

There is a large overlap between teachers from compulsory education system and those in private language schools, not simply in terms of individuals using experience in one of these sectors to continue their career in the other, but also because many teachers work in both concurrently. The trajectories of staff working in language schools are therefore remarkably similar to those described earlier in this chapter. One notable difference is the high staff turnover of private institutions, and it is frequent to find even young teachers with only a few years' experience having worked for several different language schools. This is particularly true in Algiers, where the number of language schools is already high and ever increasing, and allows these teachers to easily look for better working conditions, a more convenient location or higher pay elsewhere (fieldnotes 03/11/15, 07/02/17, interview with Tarik 08/07/17).

Who learns?

While nearly all age groups can be found in language schools, the level of classes suggests that participation is not sustained across many years. Classes cover all age groups from the second half of primary school to adults, although some institutions also offer intensive play-based courses for younger children. Although theoretically offering all levels from complete beginners to advanced, the vast majority of groups fall within the "false beginner" to "early intermediate" categories (A1-A2 to B1 on the European Framework for Languages - EFRL). This is remarkably consistent in all language schools, and conversation or advanced classes (C level on the EFRL) are nearly exclusively found in the para-tertiary education spaces (such as student clubs). Observations in language schools and interviews with school managers and teachers across the country highlighted three main categories of learners:

- children (mostly 7-17) whose parents register them in language school;
- well-to-do students in English departments who either feel that they are struggling at university or that they are not learning enough in their lectures;
- professionals who require English for their job, with some welcoming the opportunity and others resenting the obligation.

The first two categories especially belong to the middle classes, a trend further analysed in section 5.4.

Language school staff are noticing a steep increasing in the number of children learning English, with remarks that parents were bringing their children at a younger and younger age. In some cases, the children are being educated in private schools, and are already taught English as part of the primary curriculum but not to a standard which is deemed acceptable by their parents. For Mouna, it is an

obvious result from the failures of the traditional pen-and-paper method and small number of contact hours:

> Yes, many people try to introduce English to young learners but the mistake, I could notice that the mistake they did is either the number of hours which is not sufficient and this is actually what's happening in all schools, it is like one hour a week, so I can consider it like it doesn't exist! One hour a week. Parents are complaining about this. (interview 07/02/17)

Language schools are thus an extension of the education system, with teaching staff closely intertwined across sectors, and justifications for registration often hinging on popular narratives of schools' institutional and pedagogical failures.

Other middle class parents also try to replicate the French-speaking environment they are raising their children in, by seeking to provide similar spaces in English. Here, Mouna details how she created intensive classes for her four year old daughter and her friends, who already spoke Algerian Arabic and French at home:

> Yes, so her and her friends. And they started having intensive classes, sixty hours a month, so three hours a day, believe me after five months, this is a new experience as well, after five months they managed to speak, to understand, to interact, only in English. But here again, the way they learnt, English way, is different. It's not through a book, it's not through a copybook, it's not through grammar, it's through interaction, games, videos and real situations. They spent like time playing together, speaking only English with the teacher, I made sure that the teacher speaks with them in English. When they eat, she speak to them in English, and then… I started talking to her only in English and hamdullah now, she speaks English fluently. (interview 07/02/17)

Mouna links 'speaking fluently' with 'real situations', an English-only environment and 'authentic' materials such as videos. Play-based learning is equated to 'the English way', reproducing discourses of English as both language and space of technological and pedagogical innovation.

Nonetheless, not all parents can access or afford this type of environment. Most schools cannot cater to young children as they require them to have already learnt the Latin script, which they do in the third year of primary school in the state system.

> C'est vrai, on a beaucoup qui viennent inscrire leurs enfants, là de plus en plus jeunes, on a des gens dont les enfants apprennent à peine les lettres latines et qui veulent que… C'est-à-dire qu'ici on commence le français je crois en deuxième année. Donc première année c'est pour l'arabe, ils connaissent pas encore les lettres latines. Sauf s'ils ont été à la crèche ou ils ont été dans un préscolaire privé où ils ont déjà appris… Alors souvent on a des enfants, ils nous disent on veut les inscrire à six ans, mais on n'a pas de classes de six ans… Pourquoi? On essaye de savoir s'ils écrivent les lettres latines ils nous disent "non, pas encore". Ils les ont pas encore appris à l'école. Mais là c'est de plus en plus jeune, même des gens qui ramènent des enfants de sept ans pour apprendre l'anglais.[24]

[24]It's true, we have a lot [of parents] who come to register their children when they're younger and younger, we have people

(interview with Amina 12/02/17)

English represents a skill and subject which more and more parents consider important for their children to learn at a young age and outside the formal education system if needs be, even though geographical location, social class and economic capital determine who is taking part in and can access this pedagogical trend (see section 5.4).

Private language schools represent an important stage of many people's learning journeys, whether professionals or children. The population in these spaces is often transient (6-24 months) compared to the education system, wealthier, and not always engaged, but the way "English" is presented contributes to defining what the language is as well as what it should be learnt for. Because they deliver diplomas and are used by middle class parents as part of their children's education (see), language schools also play an important role in defining who is recognised as an "English speaker" in wider society.

3.5.2 Independent learning and "the new generation"

As alluded to when discussing student spaces, much of the language learning for some social groups is occurring outside the classroom, and investigating formal learning spaces offers only a very partial view of the linguistic situation. However, understanding the linguistic practices surrounding English outside formal education channels is a challenge, as this type of learning is by definition invisible, or at least invisibilised.

Both students and teachers highlight how most of their current linguistic skills and enjoyment were gained outside the classroom. When Zaki, a teacher at the ENS in Algiers, asked third year students where they had learnt English, most of them replied that it was mixture of inside and outside the classroom. None of the students said they had learnt the language only within school or university, and some even laughed at the idea. Despite being in conversation with their teacher, several admitted to thinking that they had not learnt anything in class but learnt all their English 'outside' (fieldnotes 24/01/17). Similarly, teachers in language schools often comment that their best students were not those who were in languages departments but those who worked on their language skills outside out of lesson time. Ouarda's description of her students highlight her impression that "mastery" came from outside the classroom:

> I have for example a group…. two years ago, here. Most of the learners they were studying either translation or English. Except for one of them, who was studying finance. And he used to have the best English among them! (interview 07/03/17)

In fact, the superiority of informal rather than formal learning was highlighted for all languages, with

whose children are barely learning the Latin letters and they want… I mean here we begin French I think in second year. So the first year is for Arabic, they don't know Latin letters yet. Unless they went to nursery or to a private preschool where they already learnt them… So often we have children, they told us we want to register them when they're six, but we don't have classes for six year-olds… Why? We ask whether they write Latin letters they tell us "no, not yet". They haven't learnt them in school year. But now it's younger and younger, even people bringing their seven year-olds to learn English

Abderrahmane teasing his colleague that:

> I didn't study Italian. I learnt it alone, Italian. Basically I'm better than her at Italian! She has a master's degree in Italian but I learnt it alone, so… what do you think! (interview 07/03/17)

What was common for nearly all participants was the downplaying of formal learning, despite being teachers and trainee teachers themselves. Building upon earlier comments around inspiration and being a good student, narratives promoting the superiority of informal learning also reinforce the symbolic capital of English speakers by highlighting that this skill was not learnt at school with everyone else, but rather thanks to their own efforts.

English becomes associated with the "younger generation" because of the learning modalities which facilitate exposure, and narratives of media change drive narratives of language change. Some channels such as NBC2, widely available on satellite, show films in English with Arabic subtitles, music in English is ubiquitous on the radio and on TV, and many learners report watching videos in English on YouTube. While some of this content is directly language-focused, from channels and Facebook pages by English teachers to more informal "tutorials" and "tips" on accents, vocabulary and specific grammar points, connectivity also increases domains of use and exposure rather than representing a straightforward replacing of the physical classroom with a virtual one. One Head of Department noted that his current students had 'better English' than the previous cohorts, which he attributed to their use of social media and the high visibility of English in those spaces (interview 13/12/17), and lecturers at other universities commented on their students' improved base level of communicative skills when starting their degrees (group conversations 19/09/17 and 05-06/12/17, fieldnotes 25/09/17). Language teachers Ouarda and Abderrahmane both shared a commonly expressed sentiment that learning English is simply 'a lot easier' now than ever before, in great part due to the internet:

> CJ: But then you mentioned that because you didn't have internet, things were harder. Do you think it's a lot easier now for…
>
> (at the same time as O) A: Yeah, yeah, a lot easier!
>
> (at the same time as A) O: A lot easier
>
> A: Yeah, for example now if I want to learn any language I can download a book, and it's easy. It's just to find the time, to create the time, and that's it. Because I already have the key to languages, for example now I speak English so I can start learning German, because it's from the same family. I have an idea about Italian, about the notions, the basics of Italian, so if I wanted to learn Spanish it's going to be easy for me. All I need to do is to download the book, watch for example videos in Spanish or in Italian, and problem solved. Back then it was hard.
>
> O: Speaking about hard it was back then with no internet and now with internet, for example we were trying to do this at the beginning. We were communicating on WhatsApp. I used to send him recorded lessons in Italian, and then he listens to them, and then after I ask him "give me examples" and then he records himself and he sends them back to me. You see, in the past that wouldn't have been possible.

> A: Yeah. Now with the technology, I can grab several different technologies…we have the email, we have youtube videos, we have audio, we have pdf… We have a lot of stuff. It's very easy now to learn a language. O: 70% of my Italian, I have learned it from the internet.
>
> A: yeah.
>
> OK: At the university I practically didn't learn anything to be honest.
>
> (…)
>
> CJ: You know all of the technological changes that you've mentioned, do you think that's making… that's having a real impact? Can you see that impact, as language teachers?
>
> A: Yeah. For example, "back in my time" [laughs] I'm going back to the same thing.
>
> O: Yeah, grandpa, what happened?
>
> A: It was highly impossible to find somebody who spoke English well. But now you can see, I see for example teenagers, who learned their language from TV, from songs. Last time I replaced T, who is a teacher here with us, he had a student, she's 15, she speaks perfect English. In upper-intermediate, she's 16! I was really amazed with her English! She speaks very well. I asked her "where did you learn your English" and she said TV, songs, and they go to school, she started going to this school 2 months ago, 3 months, it's not enough time. So I can tell she learnt it from TV, from movies.
>
> (interview on 07/03/17)

The internet is seen to make everything 'a lot easier' for young people, whereas learning languages 'back then' was 'hard'. Technological innovations and especially widespread access to the internet have transformed the semiotic landscape by providing more contact with English through TV channels, social media, downloadable textbooks and YouTube videos. Furthermore, such sources are portrayed as the best way of learning a language. Discourses about English cannot be dissociated from discourses about technology and the generation seen as benefiting from it. The corollary is that, once again, individual motivation is the only differentiating factors between those who do or do not learn English: the materials are all easy to find and therefore 'problem solved'. Such narratives suggest a belief that everyone is equally able to access the "language of opportunities" and other languages, but also that internet-mediated modes of learning are superior to formal learning within the classroom. Reproducing the speech found in films and songs is linked to speaking 'perfect English', reinforcing language ideologies equating "real English" with a foreign, external and mostly online language (see section 3.4.1).

Narratives of the younger generation and new ways of learning also hint at a radical linguistic shift for the country. Who exactly is included in this age group fluctuates, from anyone of student age to teenagers to only children, but the concept of a "new generation" for whom everything will be different linguistically permeates answers. Saliha, a teacher at the ENS, saw it as suggesting deeper changes at the level of the country:

> Now French is taking the terrain because of historical reasons. But what we see, students are hearing English, with films, so it's moving towards having French replaced with En-

> glish. My own experience I learn so many things from those films. [indistinct] It's an opportunity. We didn't have any opportunity. TV… that was the very big opportunity for us to hear the language… Yeah. (interview with Saliha, 07/06/17)

The idea that French is being 'replaced with English' is widely echoed in conversations across the country, from students in Tlemcen (fieldnotes 05-07/12/17) to visitors at the American Cultural Centre in Algiers (fieldnotes 31/05/17, 06/10/17, 10/09/17) and professionals (interview with Fahima, former recruiter from the South, currently working on employability programmes for an international organisation, 14/03/17). The two interviews quoted above weave together some of the themes consistently presented by participants as crucial for understanding the contemporary dynamics of English in Algeria, with the means afforded by the internet seen as mostly (or sometimes only) taken up by the "young generation", and the potential change that this could represent for the country (see chapter 4).

Although formal and informal learning are often related (in the sense of boosting results or motivation), teachers might not be aware of what their students are doing outside of school. Here, Ouarda explains how she decided to learn on her own:

> O: I remember, my first memory with English was really really bad to be honest, it was in Middle School, and I used to really not like this language. That was because we didn't have a teacher, we didn't have any English teacher for two years, and then after that I thought that my grades were not ok so during the summer holiday to go to high school I have decided to start learning English. That was because I liked English music. I started watching cartoons, I was 13 or 14 something like that, and I used to watch cartoons in French with English subtitles and I was taking notes and stuff, and I thought that I improved my vocabulary a lot, so when I started studying in high school I started having actually the best grades, moving from the worst student to the best one that was really really huge. So that really encouraged me, because I started liking it.
>
> CJ: What made you want to start watching cartoons in English and taking notes during your holidays, when you were 13?
>
> O: To be honest with you I don't know. I thought that it was the right method, although I was just a kid, but I thought that by doing that then it would be good. Nobody advised me. It was just a self-decision. (interview 07/03/17)

Ouarda underlines her foresight, perseverance and personal achievement in learning English. Her motivations came both from external factors (which none of her teachers were aware of) and the fact that she then became "the best student". Considering processes outside the classroom as well as students' own narratives of their journey was thus important in my research in exploring who learns and uses English and what they do with it.

Who exactly is learning what in this informal way is complicated to ascertain, as not all potentially English-linked interests translate to increased English exposure. Gaming appears to be a driver of English learning for a minority of (mostly) young men (fieldnotes 15/12/16), although more research is needed to understand the characteristics of this population and of their encounter with English. On other hand, the widespread interest for the Premier League mostly does not equate to exposure to

English, as the games are mostly watched on BeIn Sports with Arabic commentary, with the Facebook feeds and fan pages also in Arabic (interview with Mounir, sports journalist, on 06/06/2017, and Tayeb, passionate Premier League fan who worked in the UK for a few years and now works for an international organisation in Algiers, on 10/09/17; fieldnotes 15/12/16). More research is needed to determine how football fandom, social class and language choices intersect, and the relationship of these variables to desires of mobility. Informal learning does not seem to be restricted to certain social classes or occupations, as for instance Dalya, who worked as an interpreter for a state company in Algiers, Ridha, a taxi driver from El Oued, and Samiha, an English teacher working near Algiers, all made clear that they showed their toddlers videos in English (fieldnotes 23/02/17, 09/07/17, 18/09/17), although how much they understood is another question. What is clear is that discourses of English as the international language are linked to national narratives around the "new generation" and language shift, intersecting with beliefs regarding mastery and the appropriate way of learning languages.

In conclusion, it is not surprising that highly motivated students who look for learning opportunities outside the compulsory classroom learn more, but the widespread depreciation of language skills gained within the classroom (including from English graduates) point to the necessity of considering more hidden spaces of language learning and potential language use as well as official language policy or number of registered students. While the importance of learning on your own for English is not particularly different from any other language learning, what is significant is also the constant reference to a growing generational divide effected or facilitated by technology, and the resulting notion that this "new generation" will transform the linguistic situation of the country.

3.6 Conclusion

Quantitative data estimating English proficiency is patchy and often unreliable. Compulsory schooling in English does not equate to either the acquisition of English competences nor to actual English use once outside the classroom walls. It is therefore crucial to consider the variety of ways people acquire exposure to and confidence in using English, and the types of discourses associated with these informal learning spaces. Through ethnographic data, my fieldwork refines these estimates by bringing a qualitative understanding to who uses what where and how. Mapping sites of learning for different social groups enable us to trace the overlapping processes of appropriation and re-localisation of both discourses and practices.

Understanding where English is learnt allows us to form a clearer picture of the language ideologies which become attached to English through the teaching and learning process, and question whether it is possible to make generalisations about the language practices of certain groups in society. In many ways, the dynamics of who learns and uses English, where, and what discourses are attached to them in Algeria are similar to many countries where English does not fulfil a clear intra-national role, including in areas within former British colonies. This chapter demonstrates that although English tuition

is officially compulsory and universal for everyone who has been enrolled at secondary school (and has been so since independence), in practice this translates to a certain awareness of English rather than conversational levels, and only the minority who have carried on their studies to university are likely to have incorporated the language into their wider linguistic repertoire. Even within this social category further stratification emerges, dependent upon both structural factors (the availability of ESP classes and English-language spaces) and individual characteristics defined as awareness, determination and enthusiasm by participants. Self-defined English speakers can be found outside of English departments and their graduates in the workplace, as professionals attend language schools to develop their language skills for work reasons, and middle class parents register their children to classes. Most notably, young people also attend English-speaking spaces created in or around university networks, and resort to autonomous invisibilised learning through films, music, and social media. Although English is considered "absent", participants stress that linguistic awareness of and exposure to English is much greater for the "younger generation". Narratives of discrediting the education system, technological transformations and the existence of a "new generation" underlie discourses about what English is and who learns and uses it. This chapter thus provided the background to understanding the discourses of competition, authenticity, identity, opportunities and social mobility examined in the following two chapters.

Chapter 4

English for the nation: neutrality, resistance and the politicisation of culture

4.1 Introduction

While English remains marginal in terms of daily use, its visibility is increasing both discursively and graphically. As mentioned in subsection 3.5.2, participants associated English with the "new generation" and "new technology", especially the internet, and therefore surmised that "young people" would use the language more and more, at the expense of French. Ouarda, an Algéroise born and raised, was keen to paint the contrast between five years ago and today:

> Huuuuuge difference. I can, without even speaking about when I was younger, I remember six years ago, no sorry, 2012, when I finished my English studies at university and I started teaching right after. Actually I started before, but officially right after, I used to notice how people looked at me like an alien when I used to speak English outside, like on the road. Everybody used to be really impressed or used to think that I was crazy, that I was insane, because people were not speaking that much English. It wasn't very frequent. But now, wherever I go, I go to the market, I go to the swimming pool, I go to the gym, I go to school, I go take the bus, I hear people speaking in English. Like friends, teenagers, and they are speaking in English! Whether good or bad English, but it became kind of... fashion, trendy now. Somebody who speak some English like "waw, impressive". So that's a huge difference, in a matter of four years! So we don't even need to compare how it used to be before.' (interview on 07/03/17)

Both within professional and classroom settings, participants underlined that the number of speakers of English was on the rise, but that this was a new phenomenon and that baseline numbers were very

low. "New" here related mostly to the end of the 1990s, to the increasing availability of English shows on satellite TV, and to the widespread use of social media.

Previous survey results showed positive attitudes towards English, whereas attitudes towards French are much more mixed if not outright negative (Benrabah, 2007a, 2014; Benstead & Reif, 2013; Euromonitor International, 2012). However, there has not been any large-scale research into how respondents view the place of both languages, and if attitudes are so constrasted, whether (and which) practices are being relocalised from French to English, and how this might impact socio-economic hierarchies and categories. This chapter brings into dialogue different perspectives on the place of English in Algeria, from its role in indexing novelty and globalisation to how it remains firmly constructed as foreign. With French being the former colonial language and still playing an important role in politics, education, business and culture as well as acting as a marker of social class and education, discourses about English (rather than practices being relocalised into English) serve to formulate hopes for the future of the country, with English being understood through French, and French spoken about through English. Much of the data from this chapter does not come from interviews but rather from fieldnotes, as it is comprised of repeated comments, questions and answers from my participants upon being introduced to my research or when explaining why others want to learn English. In a sense, folk linguistics is at the heart of this chapter, as participants and I strive to make sense of what "English" is, what is happening with "it" in the country and how this is linked to wider social, economic, cultural and political questions.

English can be used as a symbol for economic and political liberalisation, as a critique against "francophone elites" and neo-colonial interference and as an opportunity to transform stifling language ideologies enacting elite closure through "purity" and "mastery". Discourses about English are integrated within existing processes of the politicisation of culture, enabled through constructions of English as "neutral" and "universal", but also firmly "foreign". The seemingly contradictory nature of these beliefs are in fact a key part of the conversation around English: the language is simultaneously nowhere and everywhere, and becomes an ideal vehicle for discussions about language, identities and inequalities. This chapter considers the prevalent explanation that English is in competition with French, exploring how the contradictory constructions of resistance to neo-colonialism and neutrality in the Algerian context function as proxies to discuss not only French but what it indexes, even though practices are much more complex. The second half of this chapter examines what counts as "English" by exploring narratives that the language is simultaneously everywhere and nowhere, and analyses how concurrent discourses of absence, universality and "foreign-ness" also serves to make English the site where constructions of the "Other" are relocalised.

4.2 English through the prism of French

4.2.1 "De-colonised"? French, English and resisting (neo-)colonialism

Benrabah's position in his research is particularly important in this respect as he is considered the main authority on this topic, and students in English departments across the country referred to his work to bolster their explanations of the place of English in Algeria (fieldnotes 04-06/12/17, amongst others). There are numerous references to his work not only in his alma mater (Tlemcen) but across all universities, and he is the author referred to most often by Algerian scholars working on the English language in Algeria (conversations with Algerian PhD students undertaking their doctorate in the UK, March-May 2018) as well as in publications in English (see for instance Le Roux, 2017; Spolsky, 2018) and on Wikipedia. In his explanation of what he saw as a conflict between languages, the openness and international status of English was particularly pronounced when in comparison with French (Benrabah, 2007a). The non-exclusiveness of English explains why 'Algerian Islamo-nationalists (…) turn a blind eye to British imperialism and prefer English over French' (Benrabah, 2013, p. 114) and confirm the 'success' of the former 'as an ex-colonial language in the post-colonial era' (Benrabah, 2013, p. 19). What Benrabah's work exemplifies is how "English" is understood through the prism of colonial comparison with French.

Promoting English was seen as a way of combating French neo-colonialism by reducing the importance of the French language. Whether the discussions were taking place in language schools or in companies, participants underlined the continuous negative influence of the French government, from the pernicious effects of colonisation on the education system to perpetual interference in matters of linguistic policy. Abderrahmane, a language teacher based in Algiers, was particularly explicit in this interview about his beliefs regarding French involvement in Algerian policies and the idea of competition between languages:

> Because the French government interferes. I explained this to you yesterday, because the Minister of Education, the former one, he explained how the French government gave the Algerian government money to stop English language, because it represents a threat to the presence of French here. Now we have this…English is struggling against the Francophones. But I believe, I am sure 100%, that this language is going to win. (interview with Abderrahmane 07/03/17)

Abderrahmane's belief that the French government and "the Francophones" are responsible for the failure of the 1992-1994 English language reforms (see Introduction) was found in all groups of participants, whatever their age, gender, social class or geographical location. Only one participant, an academic from the West of the country whose mother had been a primary school teacher in the 1990s, thought that the main issue was the lack of materials and trained staff rather than political opposition (fieldnotes 20/05/17). For others, including teachers and inspectors in post at the time (including some who might be considered part of this elite themselves), the Francophone elite, backed by the French government, thwarted any policies which could lead to a reduced importance of the French language

(Manseur, 2017, also further discussed in subsection 5.4.2). The most common frame to understand "English" was as a threat to the predominance of French.

Three examples are used here to demonstrate how discourses of global competition between French and English are being refracted and appropriated within the Algerian setting in different locations. Participants in both Algiers and Tlemcen suggested that young and adult learners of English were interested in the language in order to diminish the importance of French. Tarik, who grew up in a working-class neighbourhood in Algiers and worked in language schools across the city, explained that younger students especially do not feel comfortable in French and resent the visual and aural presence of the language, having done their schooling in Arabic and with French only taught as a foreign language (albeit from primary school onwards). He referred to one of his teenage students as saying 'I don't like walking around Algiers and seeing French everywhere', echoing the feelings of other classmates for whom French was a remnant of colonisation and a symbol of their own exclusion (interview on 08/07/17). At one of the most prestigious science-specialist university, which attracts students from all over the country, an image representing a group of three students speaking "French" while the fourth one feels excluded by their lack of understanding was shared on a Facebook group (see figure 4.1), garnering dozens of likes and comments (mostly in derja). This particular post was mentioned to me in person by members of the group the following day, who sought to explain why English was seen as a remedy to the frustration with the prevalence of French in the capital and the association between academic results and the French language, which advantages certain sections of the population (urban, from French-educated families, with high social capital) over others. Similarly, postgraduate students in the English Department at the University of Tlemcen stressed that in their experience the main reason anyone would learn English was 'to rebel against French', although this reasoning was always applied to others rather than themselves (conversation 04/12/17). They explained that French was seen as the language of the coloniser and of the elite, and that its presence unduly advantaged Algiers and Oran over other cities such as Tlemcen. Although Tlemcen itself is a wealthy and historically important city, students felt marginalised economically and culturally, and saw this exclusion as magnified by language.

In my fieldwork, although there were many references to the short-lived 1990s pilot of language choice in primary school, none of my participants mentioned English as the "language of the Islamists". It is unclear why this frame (or even the very word "Islamist") was not mentioned at all. This could possibly be because this particular discourse is restricted to a portion of the population which I did not come into contact with, or because it became less relevant to my participants in the 2010s as it had been previously, due to both economic and demographic factors. Just under 25% of the population is under 25 years old, and many of my participants only had indirect memories of the dark decade. With English being associated with "the new generation", other frames of reference might have become more salient for them due to economic and technological shifts over the last twenty years. The increase in oil prices in the 2000s and limited economic reforms led to a boom for the nascent private sector as well as the augmentation of foreign investment and multinational presence (El Kadi, 2017; Hamouchene & Rouabah, 2016). As discussed further in subsection 5.3.2, some business practices are being relocalised

Figure 4.1: A post in one of the USTHB's (Université des Sciences et de la Technologie Houari Boumediene) English speakers' Facebook group (October 2017)

to English, and widening links to the rest of the world is seen as happening through the medium of English, facilitated by the internet and the nation-wide 4G coverage since 2016-2017. Frames of reference for the relocalisation of English therefore already appear to have shifted within the last ten years.

Language and history are also tightly interwoven in equations of language and colonial rule, with British imperialism described as more "benevolent" compared to French, a comparison found both in academic literature (see for instance Benrabah, 2009) and reproduced by participants in student clubs. The idea of English as "not as colonial" or "decolonised", although not referred to as such, was a recurrent theme especially for English-speaking participants in their late teens and early twenties, and was offered as part of a general conversation on English in Algeria, unprompted by any mentions of colonisation or French on my part. For instance, in conversations with students in English-language clubs in different cities, the connections between English and colonialism were not seen either as as tight or as damaging as for French. Several young men and women highlighted their understanding of countries such as India and Hong Kong as having succeeded thanks to colonisation and the English language's ability to support economic wealth without disrupting traditions. Although others disputed that economic success could be attributed to colonisation, there was a consensus that British colonisation had been less disruptive and therefore former colonies were in a 'better place' or 'doing well' compared to former French colonies (fieldnotes 31/05/17, 05/10/17 and 05/12/17). The demographic slant of this particular narrative of imperial comparison might also be related to material available online, as students referred to videos and posts they had seen on YouTube and Facebook, although they could not remember the particulars (fieldnotes 05/10/17 and 05/12/17).

Nonetheless, discourses of English displacing French are not new within the Algerian context. Even though the British Council is celebrating a 'historic opportunity' for English to take over North Africa (British Council, 2016), they have in fact already published several reports 'predicting the displacement of French by English' in Algeria in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Benrabah, 2013, p. 95). By

the end of the 1980s the complete Arabisation of the secondary school led Hayane to predict that 'l'importance de la langue anglaise sera à peine inférieure à celle de la langue française'[1] (1989, p. 169). In 1995, Khaoula Taleb-Ibrahimi commented on the 'incursion timide, mais résolue de la langue anglaise, essentiellement dans le domaine scientifique, incursion largement encouragée avec l'arrière-pensée de concurrencer le français'[2] (1995, p. 50). Viewing the linguistic situation in Algeria as one of "competition" between languages, including between French and English, has therefore been a recurrent explanatory framework and prediction for the past forty years.

The idea that English can become an alternative to or replacement for French in order to move away from colonial legacies of socio-linguistic hierarchies is the main lens through which participants make sense of the dynamics of "English" in contemporary Algeria, why people would learn or use it and how it intersects with social worlds. Like the notion of a "younger generation", replacement is also mostly shifting, future, and about unnamed others.

4.2.2 Back to the future: neutrality, authenticity and belonging

"Resistance" to colonialism and neo-colonialism is only a partial representation of the discourses used to explain the national and local linguistic contexts. Global discourses of English as "de-ethnicised" and "de-colonised" are appropriated through not only the comparison with French but also references to "neutrality" and "authenticity". The idea of English as historically absent from Algeria enables the possibility of viewing it as "neutral" compared to the established proxies in the political debate that are French, Standard Arabic, Algerian Arabic and Tamazight. English avoids the tropes linked to the 'prescriptions and proscriptions of national cultural politics' which have been used to 'turn culture into a war zone' (McDougall, 2017a, p. 248). Unlike French and its uncertain status, participants describe English as a 'genuine foreign language' (fieldnotes 05/11/16, 07/03/17, 04/12/17, amongst others), and in the Algerian context detached from any religious, regional or historical connotations. From external funders concerned about "stability" to academic concerns about multilingualism, political pluralism or economic reform (cf. subsection 1.4.4), the very myths of neutrality woven around English represent a continuation of the politicisation of the cultural rather than a deviation from this pattern, but this does not invalidate the relevance of the concept of "neutrality" for participants themselves.

The idea that English is neutral because, unlike French, it is not the colonial language (in this context) is also relayed in French-speaking spaces. Gaël, senior member of staff at the Institut Français in Algiers, reflected that English, unlike French 'n'est pas miné au niveau de la religion, du régionalisme, de la colonisation. Il ne questionne pas ce qu'est l'arabe'[3] (interview 04/11/15). When talking about the place of English in the country, participants in Algiers mentioned the idea that "people" wanted English to replace French because the former did not threaten or disrupt Algerian politics, education and

[1] the importance of the English language will be barely inferior to that of the French language

[2] slow but resolute incursion of the English language, mostly into the scientific domain, an incursion which is widely encouraged with the ulterior motive of competing with French

[3] it doesn't have explosive connotations regarding religion, regionalism, colonisation. It doesn't question what Arabic is

"traditions". While this narrative was not found as explicitly in other cities, it does not automatically translate to its irrelevance outside the capital, as comparisons with French were a concern throughout the country. Explaining the relocalisation of practices into English as a 'shield to protect Arabic' because English is not seen as 'a destroying language'[4] was found across different socio-economic backgrounds, from socially mobile teacher Tarik to Aymen, who grew up in a wealthy family and now works for an international institution, and Gaël, an immigrant from France (interviews on 08/07/17 and 04/11/15). Discourses of English as "neutral" within an Algerian context serve to explain why its "spread" is seen as positive and an opportunity to remove the cultural, economic and political influence of France.

Affirming one's dislike of French and promotion of English can thus also be seen as part of a performance of an "authentic" Algerian identity based on Arabic (and not French). If, as Benmayouf suggests, 'on a presque envie de dire "dis-moi quelle(s) langue(s) tu parles, je te dirai qui tu es"'[5] (2009, p. 15), then English represents another tool through which to express one's conceptions of national identity, even if daily practices do not conform to a simplistic format (see subsection 4.2.3). Pronouncements on language choice and interests signal one's positioning in terms of belonging and status: while French is described in terms of one's language competence (which brings social status), opinions about English are voiced in affective terms (Lounici, 2007, p. 85). Competence or actual use are not strictly necessary, as the symbolic meaning can be achieved simply by expressing preference for one language over another, without necessarily changing one's linguistic repertoire or one's behaviour.

Equating the relocalisation of practices from French to English as a protection of Arabic is another mechanism through which "English" becomes associated with the (re)creation of a more "authentic" Algerian identity, because less marked by the colonial past. Within an Algerian context, the Arabic language becomes the key site and marker of "authenticity, building upon the symbolic equivalence between Arabic and "Islamic authenticity" (Grandguillaume, 1991, p. 49), and between Arabic and Algerian culture: 'celle [la culture] de l'authenticité et de tout ce qui est en rapport au terroir s'exprimant en arabe'[6] (Amrane, 2010, p. 43). Authenticity, as 'the moral foundations upon which self-identity is reflexively constructed' (Seargeant, 2009, p. 89, paraphrasing Giddens), is an important rhetorical device which allows for social and political debates to be relocalised to the cultural sphere (McDougall, 2017a). Similarly, global discourses of English emphasise its "authenticity" (English is not threatening to other cultures as it has been re-appropriated) and "anonymity" (it is neutral and universal), both aspects reinforcing the uncritical use of those concepts (Seargeant, 2012, pp. 147–148). However, explanations of English as allowing for the reclaiming of a more "authentic" past are not expressed by all participants, and seems to be particularly used by highly educated, politically-engaged French-speaking individuals who described themselves as "reflexive" or "philosophical", and always about the motivations of others rather than their own. There is a certain critical dissociation inherent to the discourse, where it is always (other) "people" who seek this "authenticity" (see also subsection 4.3.2).

[4]These particular wordings are from Aymen.

[5]We are tempted to say "tell me which language(s) you spend, I will tell you who you are."

[6]the authentic culture and all that is related to the "terroir" is expressed in Arabic

However, discourses of neutrality and comparisons with French also allow for the rethinking of Algerian-ness through English and connections to "the world" and "the future". English is systematically constructed as pertaining to "abroad" and outside. It is a means of communication to reach out beyond national borders. As Feryel explains,

> pour nous, en Algérie, l'anglais c'est pour transmettre le message au monde, c'est utiliser l'anglais. Parce que le français, c'est pour les Algériens. Mais l'anglais c'est tout le monde qui l'utilise[7]. (interview 15/03/17)

Learning and using English thus offers possibilities of bypassing borders to connect with 'tout le monde'. In the capital, Meriem expressed a similar rationale, with English as 'la langue avec laquelle nous communiquons avec le monde extérieur':

> Dans l'anglais universitaire je pense qu'on a recours à l'anglais dans le milieu de la recherche, ou alors les gens qui préparent des masters, des mémoires, dans des disciplines spécifiques, langues étrangères, mais sinon dans le milieu professionnel, par rapport à l'anglais, par exemple dans cette compagnie, je dirais que l'anglais a toujours suscité un intérêt, puisque nous sommes dans ce secteur, donc c'est très important. C'est la langue commerciale en Algérie, c'est la langue des transactions avec le monde extérieur, donc déjà [dans cette compagnie] c'est la langue avec laquelle nous communiquons avec le monde extérieur (...), tous nos prestataires de services à l'étranger, c'est la langue aussi dans nos emails, dans les contrats, certains services, c'est la langue que nous utilisons souvent dans des réunions de négociation. [pause] Voilà, en somme... et ici dans notre compagnie ça touche plusieurs registres, anglais juridique, anglais financier, anglais technique, anglais informatique, l'anglais technique (...) Depuis plus de vingt-trois ans j'utilise l'anglais et donc la compagnie accorde un intérêt particulier à cette langue étrangère, d'autant plus qu'elle lui...consacre même un budget, un budget de formation, aussi bien pour la formation en langue anglaise au niveau... dans des organismes externes, et maintenant avec le temps ça va être en interne[8] (interview 23/02/17)

In both of these interviews, participants were speaking to me in French, and describing English as the language of the outside. Despite the negative attitudes expressed about the French language (often conveyed in French) in Algeria, it remains a familiar language, nothing out of the ordinary, and a frequent medium of communication between Algerians online, in the media and when conducting

[7] For us, in Algeria, English is to convey our message to the world, it's using English. Because French, it's for Algerians. But English, everyone uses it.

[8] In academic English I think we use English in the research community, or people who are preparing masters, dissertations, in specific disciplines, foreign languages, but otherwise in the professional environment,if we're talking about English, for example in this company, I would say that English has always aroused interest, since we are in this specific field, so it's very important. It is the commercial language in Algeria, it is the language of transactions with the outside world, so already [in this company] it is the language with which we communicate with the outside world (...), all our service providers abroad, it is the language of our emails, of contracts, certain departments, it is the language which we use often in negotiation meetings. [pause] So, all in all ... and here in our company it covers several registers, legal English, financial English, technical English, computer English, technical English (...) I've been using English for more than twenty-three years and therefore the company pays particular attention to this foreign language, especially since it ... even devotes a budget, a training budget, for English tuition both... in external organisations, and now with time it's going to be internally

administrative business. However, learning and using English allows for more global connections, whether in a professional situation or simply to send 'our message to the world' (also discussed further in chapter 5).

The idea of building of new networks through English is a recurrent explanation of why Algerians would learn and use the language. A teacher working at a language school in the West of the country interpreted the boom in demand for English tuition as a sign that 'young people are thinking big' because the language allows for 'a whole opening to the world', while another, who was also a teacher trainer, portraying his learning objectives as 'I don't train them how to teach but how to deal with strangers' (fieldnotes 05/12/17). Cultivating these new connections developed through English and facilitated by social media are also a means to go beyond the colonial relationships, ma3rifa[9] and elite closure. "Friends" from all over the world are added on Facebook both as a means (practising English) and an end (occasional information and support towards migration and other opportunities). Some groups are specifically conceived as connecting Algerians of the diaspora, but in effect both the already emigrated and the hopefuls cohabit in this space. Students especially talked about being in contact with people living in various parts of the world, or with Algerians abroad: for some it was an opportunity to practise, for others a way to learn more about undertaking internships elsewhere or to learn new skills and facts which would give them "an edge" (fieldnotes 25/09/17, 11/10/17). Figure 4.2 shows a very small sample of the number of Facebook groups which are a variation upon the theme of "I am Algerian and I speak English", as well as specialist groups focusing on sharing resources such as for teacher or PhD students, and groups connecting "friends all over the world" and Algerians in the diaspora. All types of groups were used everyday by all my participants, whether just reading posts or posting themselves. In all three cases, English is seen as the enabler as it represents the link to "outside". Even though students could practise with each other, this activity acquired more legitimacy and is endowed with more prestige when undertaken with foreigners (see subsection 4.3.1 and section 5.4).

English also allows the reimaginings of connections within Algeria as new forms of belonging within a global framework. Existing practices of social solidarity are being relocalised in English, labelled as "civic engagement" when conducted in English-speaking groups and thought of as a new way of connecting to society. The creation of and membership in English-medium spaces and organisations such as AIESEC or student clubs connect the development of the self with the development of society through the use of a "new" language. Discourses of novelty, universality and the "new generation" reinforce each other, as exemplified by the enthusiasm for transnational knowledge platforms. Rather than organising disconnected conferences or events, students and recent graduates expressed their interest in connecting their events within a wider English-speaking framework, even though the talks themselves might be in Arabic or French as well as English. One such popular framework was TED, which combines a recognisable global brand and accompanying online platform with the possibility of hosting local events (TED, n.d.). In fact, in the events witnessed, only a handful of talks were delivered

[9]ma3rifa (or maarifa), from the Arabic مَعْرِفَة meaning "knowledge", refers here to knowing people and having contacts to facilitate administrative and professional pursuits.

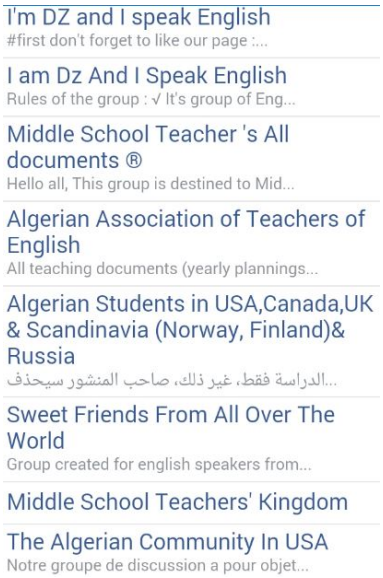

Figure 4.2: Examples of Facebook groups

in English, with this language being reserved for introductions or promotional material (fieldnotes 18/02/17, see also figure 4.3). Members from the organising committee felt that using English on Facebook and as the thread throughout (the compere introduced talks and presenters in English) was the obvious rather than the conscious choice for a TEDx. The language is here meaningful as packaging and for its symbolic indexing of global connections and knowledge, but the content itself was delivered in a variety of other languages.

Strategic use of English indexes both new connections within Algeria and to the outside, performing a certain Algerian-ness for "new" audiences. For the Algiers-based creators of Algerian Black Pearl radio, one of the aims of using English was to 'show that we speak English in Algeria' (fieldnotes 25/09/17 and 28/09/17). In the West of the country, one of the universities had been taking part in a US-organised online cultural exchange programme, which was designed to 'develop the spirit of tolerance' and give students 'experience with foreigners', in the words of the manager running the programme (interview with Abdennour 05/12/17). The criteria used to select the students were not just linguistic knowledge but also cultural knowledge (of Algeria and the wider world) and 'interpersonal behaviour', as they were expected to behave as ambassadors to the nation (fieldnotes 05/12/17). The "new generation" was to be both filled with civic and national pride and fully integrated and connected with the world. The idea of English as facilitating the presentation of worthy representatives of the nation is not specific to the north of the country. The extract below is but one example of how participants explained the indexicality of English as "foreign" and "international", and how this enables the relocalisation of practices in this language to be read as a way of inserting Algerian knowledge and events within a global frame:

> F: C'est-à-dire je présente les infos, je fais un reportage en anglais, c'est-à-dire quoi, c'est-à-dire que mon message est transmis….à l'Europe, au monde entier. Voilà, donc c'est ça le but. Et ça réussit. Alors que la dernière fois ils ont fait une cérémonie en anglais,

Figure 4.3: The stage, audience and members of the organising team (in black and maroon) of a TEDx event near Algiers (February 2017)

> c'est-à-dire qu'ils ont honoré des acteurs, des actrices, c'est comme… Le Fennec d'Or[10]! Ce qui m'a vraiment plus ils sont venus d'autres pays, c'est-à-dire le Maghreb, l'Algérie, l'Europe… Le journaliste, ou bien le présenteur, a fait la présentation en arabe, et il y avait une présentatrice qui a présenté en anglais.
>
> CJ: D'accord…Donc toute la cérémonie?
>
> F: Oui, toute la cérémonie. Exactement.
>
> CJ: Pour le Fennec d'Or?
>
> F: Oui, l'année passée. C'était vraiment…moi, quand j'ai entendu ça, c'est vraiment…et tout le monde l'a apprécié, et a apprécié cette idée. C'est-à-dire pas toujours français français français, parce que nous, on est arabes, on comprend l'arabe, et pourquoi je répète le français, c'est-à-dire la présentation en français, alors que arabe, nous, arabe-français c'est l'équivalent. Donc on comprend les deux langues. Mais ils ont fait cette nouvelle idée pour attirer le public, pour attirer les autres outside.[11] (interview with Feryel 15/03/17)

[10] A set of awards for Algerian actors, directors and film-makers

[11] F: I mean, I'm presenting the news, I'm doing a report in English, it means my message is conveyed… to Europe, to the whole world. There, so that's the goal. And it's successful. And so last time they did a ceremony in English, I mean they praised actors, actresses, it's like… Le Fennec d'Or! [the Algerian film awards] What I really liked was that they came from other countries, like the Maghreb, Algeria, Europe… The male journalist, or the male presenter, did the presentation in Arabic, and there was a female presenter who presented in English.

CJ: Ok… So the whole ceremony?

F: Yes, the whole ceremony. Exactly.

CJ: For the Fennec d'Or?

F: Yes, last year. It was really… When I heard that, it's really… And everyone liked it, we liked this idea. I mean not always French French French, because us, we're Arabs, we understand Arabic, and why do I repeat French, I mean the presentation in French, when actually Arabic, for us, Arabic-French it's the same. So we understand both languages. But they did this new idea to attract the audience, to attract others *outside*.

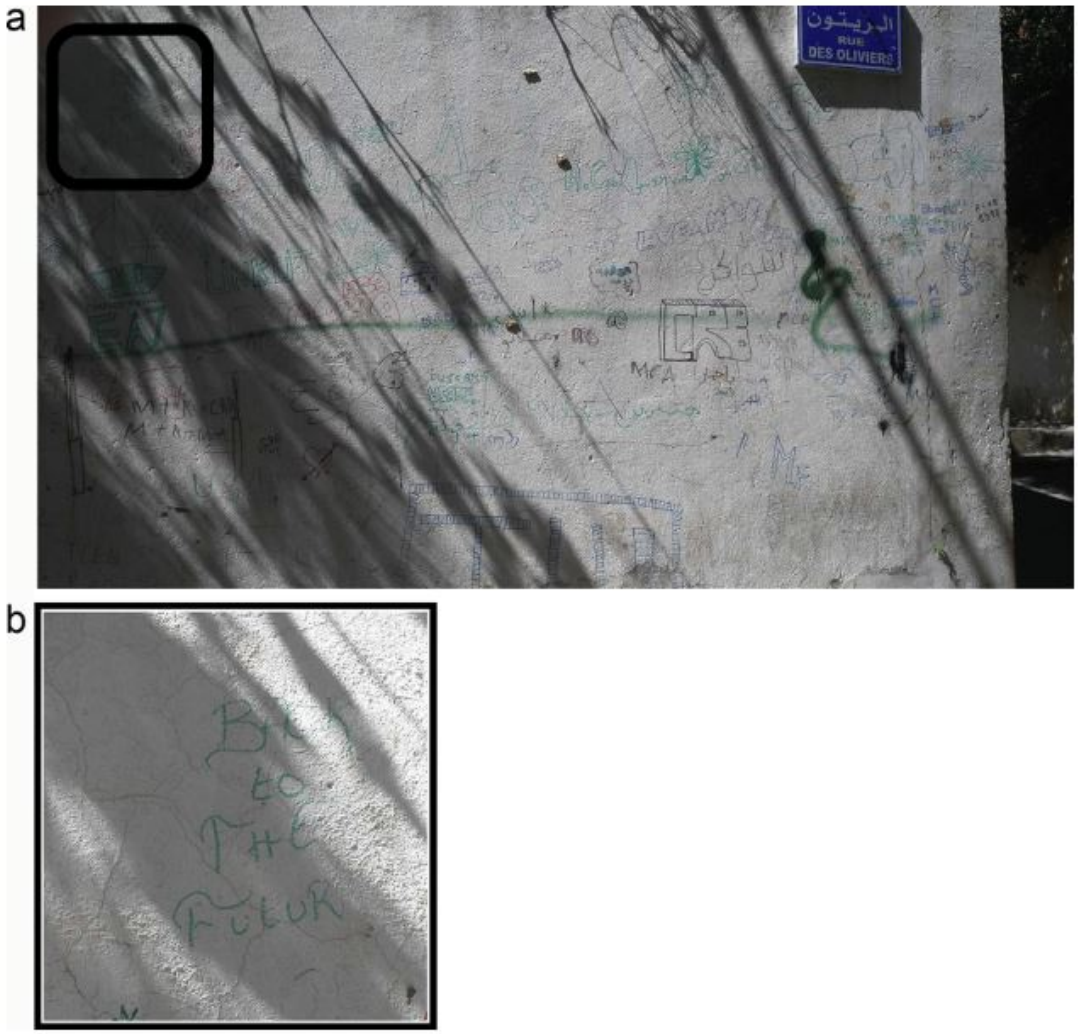

Figure 4.4: Graffiti in a lower-middle to middle class area of Algiers - context (a) and close-up (b)

Unlike French and Arabic, which represent a continuation of existing networks, English would inherently 'attirer les autres outside' and showcase an open, future-oriented Algerian identity for the world to see.

As also discussed in Jacob (2019), imperial juxtapositions and comparative neutrality contribute to constructions of English as a less threatening mediator of the colonial past and catalyst of future successes. Talking English represents a possibility of going "back to the futur", as this graffiti in a relatively well-to-do area of Algiers calls to by enmeshing (whether voluntarily or not) languages and cultural references (figure 4.4). English indexes both a movement backwards, a re-imagining of an "authentic" Algeria without the influence of the former coloniser, and forwards, to new conceptions of the future, although these discourses are as much (if not more) about French as they are about English.

4.2.3 Performative paradoxes

There seems to be a disconnect between discourses and practices in terms of priorities conceptualised on a national (or general) and a personal level. In a 2012 Euromonitor survey of attitudes concerning English in Algeria, although 78% of people surveyed agreed that the country would benefit if Algerians spoke English, this did not translate into individuals seeing the language as relevant for their own personal or professional lives (2012: 81-87). In my own fieldwork, Ilyès's friend, who joined us at the end of the day, exclaimed that 'l'anglais va remplacer le français dans quelques années, vous allez voir, les gens sont plus intéressés par l'anglais'[12] but subsequently admitted that she did not speak any English, that Ilyès was her only friend who did and that she personally did not have time to devote to the language (fieldnotes 10/12/17). This disconnect does not equate to the irrelevance of the "resistance" or "connected future" explanatory frameworks, but rather shows how discourses about "English" are often about more than a potential language shift. They enable speakers to position themselves politically and culturally, to formulate a certain vision of Algerian identities and Algerian futures, while not automatically translating into personal changes.

The separate language labels and concepts of competition and neutrality thus provide a frame through which to explore how people make sense of their socio-political surroundings, but do not represent the complex reality of practices. Although "English" is presented as a contrast to "French", especially in terms of its cultural and historical connotations and related practices, explanations of "Arabophones" using English as a shield against "Francophones" gloss over who the main users of English are.

Although English is presented as replacing French, it is mostly learnt by people who are already competent French users. All managers and teachers working in language schools across the country referred to the fact that children and teenagers registered in their English classes already had a good level of French, used both in school and in the home. When discussing the use of recorded role plays as homework in her language school in the suburbs of Algiers, Mouna pointed out that English was a language you sent your children to learn as an additional asset, not a first requirement:

> I told you that the problem is that people are not practising the language, especially, well, English or French, because people, I told you last time, people who are good at French, let's say whose parents are good at French, are here to learn English. Because their parents experienced having difficulties with English. And people who don't speak French, their children have difficulties at school so they are here to learn French. (interview 07/02/17).

In this extract, Amina, who manages a school in central Algiers, explains why:

> Les parents qui demandent ça, moi je sais qu'ici ceux qui viennent inscrire leurs enfants aux cours d'anglais, leurs enfants parlent déjà français. Maintenant est-ce qu'il y a des enfants qui parlent pas du tout français et qui sont inscrits en anglais je pense pas, ou qui viennent s'inscrire aussi en anglais… c'est une question de moyens aussi. Parce que celui qui inscrit ces enfants au cours de langue à l'âge de sept ans sachant ce que cela

[12] English will replace French in a few years, you'll see, people are more interested by English

> coûte, c'est quelqu'un qui a les moyens. Quelqu'un qui est aussi… averti et qui sait que les langues c'est un atout. Ils le disent "je fais un investissement". Il y en a qui ramènent trois enfants et je dis "c'est, c'est beaucoup pour vous", on se permet des remarques comme ça, "de débourser quand même pour trois enfants pour des cours d'anglais ici". Et ils disent "pour moi c'est un investissement"[13]. (interview 12/02/17)

Explanations such as Amina's were common throughout my field sites, whether teachers were working with children from private schools and elite backgrounds or on support programmes for disadvantaged youth. It was not Arabic-speaking parents enrolling their children to English classes to somehow "shield Arabic" and avoid French, but rather families who had already taught French to their children keen to "invest" by adding English to their linguistic repertoires.

Rather than challenging the existing pre-eminence of French in education, administration or the professional sector or contributing to negative multilingualism with practices being fully relocalised into a "benevolent" colonial language, learning patterns in effect seem to reinforce both additive multilingualism (with English an addition to the linguistic repertoire rather than replacing French) and existing social and economic hierarchies, where those who already speak French are advantaged. Even in Southern Algeria, nearly always described as the area of the country where 'everyone speaks English' because 'they don't speak French' (fieldnotes 04/11/15, 14/03/16, 12/12/17, amongst others), demand for English classes in language schools supplements rather than suppress demand for French classes, because the latter was still considered a condition sine qua non of social mobility (cf. subsection 3.5.1 and section 5.4). Only teaching English was not commercially viable, as parents are interested in support for the school subjects deemed most likely to influence their children's academic success, namely French and science. English is considered important once the "basics" have been secured (interview with Lounès, who owns a language school in the South, 14/03/17). Even in the oil and gas industry, where English competencies are a key requirement, Karen described the older generation as being much more confident in French than English, whereas the younger generation is at ease in both in addition to Arabic, rather than only in Arabic (conversation 02/03/17). Furthermore, the sharp increase in demand for English lessons has not been translated into a decrease of interest for French provision. On the contrary, Gaël noted that despite students acknowledging that they hesitated between French and English, they often chose to initially focus on the former, before developing the latter. In fact, compared to other African French-speaking countries, Algeria had the most dynamic French Institutes in terms of events and audience, showing no sign of abating (interview on 04/11/15). While language replacement and competition were important frames of explanations for the popularity of English in Algeria, the realities of socio-economic hierarchies mean that French continues to play a dominant

[13]Parents who ask that, I know that here those who come to enroll their children in English classes, their children already speak French. Now, are there children who do not speak French at all and who are signed up for English classes I don't think so, or who also come to sign up for English classes… it is a question of financial means too. Because someone who enrolls their children in language classes from the age of seven, knowing what it costs, they have to be able to afford it. It is someone who is also … knowledgeable and who knows that languages are an asset. They say "I'm making an investment". There are some who bring three children and I say "that many, it's quite a lot for you", we allow ourselves to comment like that, "to pay out for three children for English classes here". And they say "for me it's an investment".

role, with English as an additional skill rather than an adequate "replacement" at this point in time.

The performative and sometimes contradictory nature of English as "against French" was perhaps best exemplified by the reaction of a senior manager from the Ministry of Education upon learning that I also spoke French. I had been invited to attend a training day in partnership with the Ministry. I had been speaking in English to the workshop facilitators when the senior manager was introduced to me, also in English. When it was mentioned that I also spoke French, she exclaimed 'ah, welcome! Finally', hugged me, and took me by the elbow to show me around. While one of the facilitators spoke Arabic, all the others spoke English only, and she expressed her relief at being able to interact in French, although her English was very good (fieldnotes 17/02/17). Several participants, whom I saw outside of the English-speaking space I originally met them in, would glide into speaking French as part of conversations about their daily lives, when they had been speaking in English within these spaces and when they felt I had been "interviewing" them. The overlap of our linguistic repertoires allowed them to use languages in a manner that was 'plus naturel' and 'normal' (in their words). As further analysed in subsection 4.2.2, narratives of what is normal (but rejected) as opposed to foreign reinforce the symbolic role of English as indexing "new" connections as well as erasing the complexities of language practices.

Moreover, the visibility of English in the semiotic landscape operates not against or instead of French but in creative conjunction, and is found nearly exclusively in middle and upper-class areas. Although Algiers (as the capital) is considered more French-speaking than Ouargla (in the South), the semiotic landscape of the former included many more signs and adverts in English than that of the latter. In upmarket areas, translanguaging and a closer relation between everyday spoken practices and written ones were evident on shop names and adverts, with English playfully meshed with French and derja, a practice absent from working-class areas where most of the signs were in Arabic and in French. Figure 4.5 show an expensive shoe shop on the main shopping street in Algiers, signalling what it sells (shoes) through a play on words between English and French (show-sur - chaussures - shoes). In figure 4.6, a fast-food restaurant uses a combination of French, local references (16 refers to the area code for Algiers) and English on its signage. In most cases, the inclusion of English consists in common words such as "show", "family", "shop" or "store", "love" or "fashion", amongst others. While in the print media, French-language newspapers integrate more English than those published in Arabic, as the difference in scripts impede legibility (interview with Aymen, 04/11/15), some signs transliterate well-known English phrases (such as "fast food") into the Arabic script. In figures 4.7 and 4.8, both shop fronts include English phrases in both Latin and Arabic scripts to convey information, although English is not used on any additional signage such as menus on the wall or temporary information. In middle class and upmarket areas, English is visible in conjunction with French as the language of shopping, although it remains minimal overall.

In conclusion, while English is understood through and in opposition to French in discourses, practices point to much more complex modes of languaging, albeit not equally shared across all socio-economic categories. Although ideas of "resistance" to French (neo)colonialism and hopes for a more

Figure 4.5: A shop name on Didouche Mourad using English to make a pun in French

Figure 4.6: A fast-food restaurant in a middle-class neighbourhood of Algiers.

Figure 4.7: A fast food restaurant on one of Algiers' main shopping streets. The name is written in both Roman and Arabic scripts, with the Arabic a transliteration rather than a translation of the English.

Figure 4.8: Two fast food restaurants in the centre of Algiers. The word "fast food" is transliterated in the Arabic script below the name of the restaurant.

"authentic" or "open" Algerian identity structure participants' understanding of the popularity of English, the question of who actually uses English does not correspond to a competition between Arabophones and Francophones or a simple narrative of language shift.

4.3 What is "English"? Foreign-ness and the Other

4.3.1 Erasure and growing native speakerism

While previous sections brought into dialogue participants' explanations of the increasing importance of English, what counts as "English" and which practices are rewarded or ignored are the key questions which the rest of this chapter focuses on. Metalinguistic discourses, which are 'about who speaks English; what is he or she like; who speaks "good" English; and what differences in accent tell us about the speaker; and so on' (Park & Wee, 2012, p. 125), underlie discourses about why and how people use English. My fieldwork shows how these metalinguistic discourses emphasise the foreign-ness of English and the importance of mastery and correctness according to exogenous norms, resulting in localised practices being less valued (and sometimes erased) compared to practices seen as conforming to a British or US standard.

When asked about the presence of English in the landscape, respondents discounted instances of English found on signs and adverts. For them, these written signs did not constitute a linguistic presence, and were mostly used for evocation and marketing purposes, whether that was the images above, the Liverpool sandwich shop styled after the Premier League football club (figure 4.9), or a new

Figure 4.9: Liverpool sandwich shop, on the main road linking the city centre to Bouzaréah and its university campuses

upmarket café called Coffee Box which was described as evoking Starbucks, comfy seats and attentive customer service (figure 4.10) (fieldnotes 14/03/17, 25/09/17, 14/10/17). Similarly, an online item covering the opening of new "coffee shop" Star Mugs (4.11), whose tag lines are "hot and fresh drinks" and "savour / life / coffee", was not considered by young participants as including any English (fieldnotes 25/09/17, 14/10/17). Whether for adult learners in a language class (who ranged from final year high school students to senior professionals), young graduates attending workshops at the American Cultural Centre, or science students in Ouargla and Algiers, English was "nowhere" in the semiotic landscape.

Although these signs did not constitute examples of "English" for my participants, they demonstrated how the language indexed a certain imagining of modern urban life, young, connected and comfortable. They stressed that using those particular words and symbols meant the product or place was more prestigious, global and of a higher standard. As Blommaert notes, 'whenever discourses travel around the globe, what is carried with them is their shape, but their value, meaning or function do not travel along' (2005: 72). While "English" can be seen as traveling around the globe, its appropriation within Algeria's multilingual advertising practices indexes prestige and an international flavour, but is not counted as instances of "English". Djalill, who works in marketing, explained that advertising has to be done in "the language of the customers", which is not equivalent to "English":

> No, what I mean is we use English for the theory, the new concepts of work. Maybe international campaigns, marketing campaigns, all those are done in English, so that's where we get inspiration. Those are things we reflect upon. But what we produce, our products, it's the language of the customers. Either Arabic or French. (interview 05/09/17)

Although Djallil says the language of the customers is "either Arabic or French", the examples in figure

Figure 4.10: Coffee Box opened in an upmarket area where international companies, wealthy Algerians and expats mingle. Participants immediately identified the colour scheme and round logo with a US coffee shop chain and associated desirable lifestyle

OÙ MANGER

Star mugs. nouveau coffee shop

Aficionados du bon café , fait maison sans capsules, notez cette nouvelle adresse. **Star Mugs** vous invite à savourer une boisson chaude ou froide à son comptoir. Les frappés du café y trouveront leur compte. Café Liégois, Mocha, Latté, Capuccino ...c'est ici que ça se passe!

Figure 4.11: Facebook announcement for a new coffee shop opening (March 2010)

3.8 (which are representative of the wider landscape of advertising in Algeria) demonstrate how, in order to be relocalised successfully, international campaigns have to be transformed into instances of translanguaging, with English only a small part of the repertoire.

What qualifies as "English" is mediated by understandings of the existing linguistic context of Algeria and especially the place of French. When presenting my research at different universities, students and staff from English departments nearly always told me that I 'need to look at French' (fieldnotes 02/10/16 14/03/17, 20/09/17, 12/10/17, 06/12/17). Similarly, when learners and teachers complained about the absence of English in Algeria and the impossibility of practising, what they also referred to was the comparatively higher presence of French. When I mentioned to students and teachers in language schools that their situation was not dissimilar to that of most learners around the world, several participants then made the explicit relation that the only way to learn was for English to become as present as French currently is in Algiers (fieldnotes 18/10/17, 14/10/17). The low presence of English in comparison to French was thus qualified as "absence", and its inclusion within translanguaging practices read as instances of "French" or simply decorative.

What counted as "English" instead was formal use as defined by exogenous norms, and narratives of "absence" facilitated the reproduction of discourses of English as "not-Algerian". Although English is celebrated as giving its speakers a sense of equal ownership, especially in discourses comparing it to French, in practice "English" remains thought of and used as a "foreign language". Despite being confident users themselves, and priding themselves on being "English speakers", my participants still related to English as 'someone else's language'. Karen, senior manager for an oil company and originally from the UK, told the story of how she and an Algerian colleague judged essays written in English for a national competition. Her colleague was shocked that Karen privileged content over accuracy, wondering 'aren't you bothered that someone is using your language incorrectly?' (interview 03/11/15). She is but one example of the young multilinguals who use English every day in their professional and sometimes personal life too, but for whom "English" is strictly a British or American language.

On the other hand, nearly all participants used the term "international" and "universal" interchangeably to refer to the English language, and none of them applied these adjectives to any other language. In language schools, the most common response from learners when asked about why they wanted to learn English was that it was "the international language", which is sometimes explicited as "the most used language in the world" (fieldnotes 11/12/17). Previous research into secondary age pupils' language attitudes show that 'cette langue jouit d'un certain prestige auprès des élèves grâce à la musique et aux chansons anglo-saxonnes et grâce aussi à son statut de langue internationale'[14] (Asselah-Rahal et al., 2007, p. 15), being associated with universality (Lounici, 2007, p. 85). In my own fieldwork, the automatic assumption that English was "international" and "universal" was another explanatory frame used by participants to understand why people would learn or use English. For

[14]This language is quite prestigious with the students thanks to music and Anglo-Saxon songs, as well as its status as an international language

instance, Feryel (a teacher and community organiser in the South) explained that some Algerian TV channels might choose to broadcast in English to enable them to connect to everyone, everywhere, even though the language is not widespread in Algeria itself:

> le but c'est faire passer le message en Algérie et outside Algeria. Pour nous, en Algérie, l'anglais c'est pour transmettre le message au monde, c'est utiliser l'anglais. Parce que le français, c'est pour les Algériens. Mais l'anglais c'est tout le monde qui l'utilise. (interview on 15/03/17, already quoted in 4.2.2)

According to this particular explanatory frame, "English" is an international lingua franca, used to communicate with the outside world.

Another set of discourses, often used by the same participants who also described English as the international language, emphasise the historical and cultural connection between "English" as a set of linguistic practices and the UK and the US. It is the discursive reproduction of this association which enables the colonial comparisons mentioned in the previous sections. Phonetic, grammatical and lexical norms are entirely exogenous, and state-approved textbooks for use in state schools, which are always grounded in Algerian examples, mostly compare local traditions and items with British and US ones, reinforcing the links between the language and its two most prominent norm-giving centres (Messekher, 2014). Even though the majority of language schools use a variety of international textbooks to respond to their learners' various needs, teachers proudly described them as 'this very good American method' or 'this is the biggest British method' (fieldnotes 30/04/16, 07/02/17, 14/03/17). Within the textbooks themselves, although officially "international" in focus the examples are mostly drawn from these two countries, with occasional references to Canada or Australia. Although countries such as Sweden and Singapore are referred to now and again as having high number of English speakers, they do not feature in lessons or activities as examples of practices including English, and are not mentioned by teachers or learners. Even within a context praising its symbolic neutrality, talking about English also means talking about Britain and America, especially in terms of defining what "English" was or how it "should" be used. The "international language" is thus taught as a British or North American language, and it is those practices which are recognised as legitimate instance of English.

Participants did not see a contradiction between discourses of English as the international language and discourses of acceptable standards of English as only British or American. The language was used internationally but how "English" was defined and regulated was markedly localised and ethnicised to its old historical centres. Immediate correlation between the language and either Britain or the US was a recurrent theme when discussing English in general (rather than personal motivation), learning strategies, and when participants offered their thoughts on how they would change the current Algerian language situation (as seen earlier in this chapter). Ilyès, who teaches in the West, reported that his students systematically asked him 'which is better, American or British English?' (interview 06/12/17). Djallil, who used to teach in and around Algiers and now works in marketing, presented this choice as 'either Superman or Harry Potter':

> International English, it's too technical. It's for teachers and academic managers. It's not

> for students to know about international English. To them there's British and American. They choose. Logical, you know. If you see it from their perspective, they either watch Spiderman and Superman, or Harry Potter you know. You either choose British or American.' (interview 05/09/17)

Even though English is the "international language, the notion of "international English", for the small minority of participants who were aware of the concept, was not seen as relevant to language learning, leaving users with a choice between the "Superman" or "Harry Potter" standard.

In effect, teachers themselves reproduce the ambivalence between English as the international language and the only acceptable "English" to learn being standard British or American. Discussions at an English Language Teaching Conference in Oran May 2016, where English teachers from all over the country gathered, were characteristic of other discussions I had during my fieldwork. In a workshop presenting the results of a study on comprehensibility of World Englishes for learners, teachers agreed in principle to the importance of awareness of the broad range of variation within Englishes, but stressed that their students should be taught 'standard English' in any case, even if they might only ever interact with "non-native speakers" in the future. Several phonetics lecturers, who taught at different higher education institutions across the country, described "American English" (no particular variety was mentioned) as 'a problem', and recordings of speakers of Indian Englishes were laughed at (fieldnotes 31/05-01/06/16). In a group discussion with lecturers working in the English department at a South-Eastern university, a fierce disagreement ensued between teachers who believed that American English was 'just slang' and academically incorrect, and those who saw both American and British English as legitimate teaching varieties (group conversation 19/09/17). The hierarchisation of Englishes is found with learners as well, with Englishes from South Asia often singled out as at best "strange" and at worst worthy of mockery, but in any case not as acceptable models or standards (fieldnotes 30/04-01/05/16, 29/01/17, 10/09/17, 14/09/17).

The exaltation of only two varieties as acceptable standards and discourses of the "foreignness" of English reinforce tendencies towards native speakerism. Speaking "English" is equated to the mimicking of certain standardised practices defined as belonging to "native speakers". When teachers and university lecturers were talking about "the international language", only the US, UK and Canada are deemed "experts" (fieldnotes 30/04-01/05/16). Interviews with school managers across the country indicated that although parents and learners never questioned the expertise of their Algerian teaching staff, the fetishisation of native speakers seems on the rise, especially in large cities with a growing number of private language schools. Amina, who manages a school in central Algiers, reported that the percentage of parents who asked about the number of native speakers on their roll before registering their children for classes had increased over the past year, and new schools opening in other big cities used their "native speaker teachers" as a marketing ploy to attract clients (interview 12/02/17 and fieldnotes 14/10/17). Native speakerism also means that communication involving "native speakers" is considered more valuable than with "locals". For example, an intercultural programme organised by a US-based organisation was described by university staff as beneficial because it aimed to make students 'more proficient in surviving in native-like environment', whether or not students were going

to ever use their language skills with so-called "natives" (interview with Abdennour 05/12/17). What counts as "English" is not only a set of practices defined by exogenous norms, but the very practices of communication are valued more by teachers when involving "native speakers".

The presence of English on signs, slogans, advertising or online can be ignored by participants who subsequently define "English" as 'listening to the BBC', 'reading a novel', 'speaking with native speakers' or 'hearing it a lot in the streets' (fieldnotes 05/11/15, 16/11/16, 24/01/17, 11/10/17, amongst others). If the process of erasure is defined as 'a dominant ideology renders certain aspects of sociolinguistic usage invisible in order to constrain the interpretation of linguistic behaviour to a particular stereotype' (139 Seargeant, 2009, after Gal & Irvine 1995), in contemporary Algeria certain practices are erased because they do not conform to expectations of English as foreign and linked to the UK and the US. It facilitates the erasure of localised use of English as part of everyday translanguaging practices, both in terms of visibility and acceptability, maintaining English as a rarified elite practice. As discussed further in chapter 5, this narrative also immediately places the speaker in a privileged position, able to claim the prestige of a rare skill acquired against the odds (because the language is "absent") and which sets them apart from others. It is the very construction of English as "new" and "absent" which endows its speakers with higher cultural capital and facilitate the appropriation of discourses of "the international language" as equivalent to neutrality.

Everyday practices involving English are further restricted by constraints being placed (often by the speakers themselves) on not only what can be said but where the language can be used appropriately. The twin narratives of English being "absent" and "foreign" in Algeria led to participants emphasising that speaking it in the streets was "weird". When I occasionally had lunch with students outside the university campus or walked with some of the English teachers from language schools and we spoke in English, people often turned around and stared in surprise, which did not happen if we were speaking French or French and derja. Learners often commented that 'there is no English outside' and they did not feel confident to display this aspect of their linguistic repertoire in public. Lounès, who manages a language school in Southern Algeria as well as the career centre of the nearby university, offered his interpretation of the situation in an interview:

> L: Here in Algeria in general when you speak French it's ok. You speak English you are strange.
>
> CJ: Ok [laughs] so it's not really common for…
>
> L: No
>
> CJ: So if you would kind of go speaking in English in the streets people would…
>
> L: Yeah would laugh "what are you doing?!" and anyway when I want to talk on the phone in English I feel like I have to find a place where there's nobody. [laughs] (14/03/17)

Even though Lounès lives in the South, where supposedly "more people speak English", using English means finding a place 'where there's nobody' to avoid being laughed at. In the East of the country, Souad felt she needed to protect her little brother from speaking English in front of others. It was not just laughter but criticism which would result from speaking English outside, and English has to be 'kept for yourself' until you can find an appropriate space with like-minded people. Bachra was

nodding in agreement throughout this exchange, and added that this was the case even for English students:

> CJ: So your 8-year old brother is also learning.. waw.
>
> S: Yeah! When he applied, people outside don't understand it. For example when he goes.. he says "take care!" So by now he's already learnt that it's not appropriate in the streets, that he'll have to wait until he's at middle school.
>
> CJ: Oh ok, so apart from that, in the streets, you use Arabic, I mean derja
>
> S: Yeah yeah yeah.
>
> CJ: And you were mentioning that it's not appropriate in the streets?
>
> S: No, not all people will, people will not understand it. And I was avoiding speaking in a way that people criticise. They say that… Then he will break and maybe he will give up learning English so keep it for yourself until you do [indistinct]
>
> B: Even for English students, they can speak English, but to speak English or to talk in English outside it's….it's something weird. French, it's ok, it's ok in French. (interview 15/03/17)

Absence is correlated to strangeness, in the sense of "oddity" and of being an outsider, which explains the reluctance of speakers to use it in the streets. It also reinforces the impression that English is "nowhere" and the preserve of foreigners, or has to be kept within the strict confines of "appropriate" spaces as detailed in chapter 3.

Nonetheless, different participants had varying opinions on the presence of English in contemporary Algeria, with experiences seemingly mediated by social class and contact with European and North American immigrants and visitors. As Tarik jokes, speaking English also results in foreigners 'fawning over you' saying 'waw an Algerian speaking in English, that's amazing"' (interview 25/05/17). Ouarda, who comes from a wealthy French-speaking family Algérois family, thought that she could now use English everywhere and speaking English was not "bizarre" anymore.

> Now…yes. Now you find English everywhere. In the past it used to be just this. To the point that when I used to study English and go home and try to revise or something, my family used to make fun of me. "oh but you're not American" or "stop doing this". That was because nobody used to speak English and it used to sound so bizarre. But now it's everywhere! Everywhere! (interview on 07/03/17)

Later on in our conversation, she explained that she speaks French with her family but when they are in working-class neighbourhoods 'we switch to Arabic', hinting at the fact that she would not use English "everywhere" herself. In both Tarik and Ouarda's cases, it was their privileged positions through upbringing or contact with multinationals which allowed them to see their language practices be counted as "English" and rewarded with compliments and increased prestige.

Claims that 'deethnicization is probably the main reason why the English language has been maintained in Britain's ex-colonies, and why it has spread globally despite its imperial provenance' (Benrabah, 2013, p. 19) should thus be nuanced. English was defined by all my participants as "the international language", and seemed at first glance integrated within translanguaging practices in the

semiotic landscape by indexing globalisation, foreign companies and high-end products. However, not all practices which might have been categorised as "English" by an external observer (such as me) were actually recognised as such by participants. On the contrary, discursive constructions of English as "foreign" and comparison with French meant that participants did not see localised and everyday practices of English as "English", emphasising instead that the language was "absent" and that speaking it in the streets was "weird". "English" meant "British English" or "American English", used in specific contexts such as schools or in interactions with foreigners. Daily creativity and playfulness might be "Algerian" but at this stage are not considered as including "English".

4.3.2 Talking about the "Other"

Discourses of English as foreign and absent mean that English can also be used to talk about "elsewhere" and "others". Even in popular music, using English is considered 'very much a marked choice', unlike Arabic, French or Spanish (Davies & Bentahila, 2006, p. 835). Whereas the latter would be considered an integral part of many Maghrebis' linguistic repertoire to some degree, English's status as "foreign" and "external" makes its use a deviation from the norm, and therefore render it highly noticeable. The heightened sense of difference is what made nearly of my participants refer to using the language in the streets as "weird" and uncomfortable. Absence, strangeness and comparisons with French were used by participants to explain to me that it was always another group who spoke more English, thereby constructing an "Other" who used the language regularly, unlike everyone else in Algeria.

When learning about my research topic, especially if encountering me in a position of "British doctoral student", people would often follow a similar structure of answers: first talking about French, then about English as the international language, followed by a comment about a certain category of people speaking English rather than French. For instance, Afaf, who works for a branch of the national employment agency in the West of the country, suggested that I would only find English spoken amongst young people as 'ils parlent beaucoup l'anglais'[15] (discussion 07/12/17). However, when asked about where this population uses English or what they do with it, participants respond in general terms, repeating ideas of the international language, social media or not liking French without any details. When discussing their own family and friends' linguistic repertoire, participants are often the only ones within their circle to speak and use English. This not only demonstrates the importance of English-language spaces in their socialisation practices, but also exemplifies how English is both constructed as "everywhere" (the international language taking over from French in Algeria) and "nowhere" (nobody can practise), as "foreign" and a way of talking about Algerian issues.

The first "Other" I encountered was "the young generation", a group seen as key to the increasing interest in and visibility of English in Algeria but also always refracted to those younger than oneself, even by university students (cf. subsection 3.5.2). In addition, earlier concerns about the psychological

[15] which could translate as 'they speak a lot of English', 'they often speak English' and 'a lot of them speak English'

repercussions of French-Arabic bilingualism on "personality" (cf. for instance K. Taleb Ibrahimi, 1995, p. 64, who refers to Saada 1983 and Memmi 1985) are re-purposed within discourses about English and the threatening nature of the "new generation". The articulation between individual and collective identity is complex and rests on the idea that the search for an "authentic" Algerian identity goes through language and the erasure of the damage of French colonisation (Benmayouf, 2008, pp. 18–25), and that contemporary economic, social and political challenges are due to the dislocation in individuals' understanding of themselves (Cheriguen, 2007, p. 16). While English seemingly allows for a simultaneous movement backwards to a more "authentic" past and forwards to a "liberated" future, in practice not everyone can gain equal access to these claims of a new identity. Young people are described as "tainted" by globalisation and detached from their authentic indidividual and collective identity, mostly due to the failings of the public education system. In the proceedings from a national Sociology and Psychiatry conference, state corruption and the violence of the 1990s was laid at the feet of the younger generation, with one of the speakers asking: 'face à la jeunesse Coca-Cola, comment faire pour la réinstaller dans le cours de l'histoire?'[16] (Ouksel, 2001, p. 18). Globalisation (and its associated language, English) is also perceived as a destabilising threat, although this discourse was mostly reproduced in academic circles and by older professionals. Amongst my younger participants, the idea of English-mediated technology (and especially social media) as a threat to traditional values was a common discussion topic given by their teachers to students in English departments and teacher training college, who then took the theme to the sessions they facilitated in English-speaking spaces. In every single one of these presentations and debates I observed, in both Algiers and Tlemcen, the consensus was that the "new generation" was less respectful and had looser morals, partly due to increased access to social media, although themselves and their friends were the exceptions that confirmed the rule (fieldnotes 15/11/16, 10/09/17, 10/12/17). Although the fears about the "young generation" are not directly related to English, the strong symbolic links between the language and the concept of the "new generation" as well as social media means it plays a role in constructing this "Other" who does things differently, even when the speaker themselves are speaking in English.

Another "Other", prevalent especially in participants from Algiers but also found in Tlemcen, is "the South", which is viewed as more English-speaking because less French-speaking. However, Tarik, who completed his eighteen-months military service in the Sahara, was not convinced that because inhabitants of the Sahara often spoken less French, it automatically entailed that they spoke better English than in the North (interview 08/07/17). "Middle school" teachers from rural and urban areas of the South also recounted that their pupils had no interest in learning any language, be it Standard Arabic, French or English when I encountered them as a presenter in a teacher training conference in Oran (fieldnotes 30/04/16). My own field work in Ouargla (South) and El Oued (South East) highlighted that conceptions of the Sahara as a monolithic more English-speaking space than the North were simplistic, as the differences between the two cities were much greater than between "South" and "North". While students (drawn from all faculties) requested an interpreter to help understand my presentation at the University of El Oued and the vast majority of students I encountered during my

[16] faced with the Coca-Cola generation, how can we reinstate youths into history?

three-day stay did not speak much English, many shop keepers and taxi drivers had some basic notions of the language. On the contrary, students at the University of Ouargla (especially in the Engineering faculties) were on the whole very comfortable communicating in English, but very few people outside of the university and language schools spoke the language. While further research would be required to understand how English is being inserted into local language ecologies, it is clear that economic, geographical and social factors play a role in making "the South" a diverse space, from the proximity of the Tunisian border and its trade opportunities to the class make-up of engineering students at Ouargla University and its links to the oil and gas multinationals less than 100km away. Nonetheless, talking about English is here a way of constructing "the South" as an "Other" space, distinct from Northern cities.

Lastly, "native speakers" are also constructed as an "Other", with the category following racial lines. As a white European with a British accent, participants all explicitly labelled me as a "native speaker", and modified their definitions of the term to continue including me once I explained that I had not been raised in an English-speaking environment. Amina, the manager of a private language school in Algiers, had noticed the association of whiteness and English native speakers, and recounted a particular anecdote regarding one of her staff members:

> Les élèves ne font même pas la différence entre… c'est comme la CELTA Manager, many people here say the same, "we like your native speaker accent", in fact she's Dutch and has a different accent, which has nothing to do with a native speaker's accent.[17] (interview 12/02/17)

Conversely, the fact that English had been a part of the linguistic repertoire of many African students from English-speaking sub-Saharan countries was routinely ignored (fieldnotes 11/10/17, 06-07/12/17). Teachers of colour from the US were similarly excluded from the native speaker category, as they were told that they must have learnt English as a foreign language (interview with Zaki 05/10/17; fieldnotes 27/05/17, 05/17/17). The equation of native speakers of English with white skin goes as far as some students suggesting that 'all black Americans speak bad English, they only speak slang' (fieldnotes 13-14/03/17, 05/10/17, 11/10/17). Using English to 'communicate with the world' is explicited as "the West" and occasionally East/South-East Asia, but never as communicating with other Africans.

Although discourses about English contributed to the re-construction of concepts of generations, regions and race, gender did not explicitly feature as a category, and my data does not show any correlation between constructions of gender and "English" which are not mediated by more prominent unspoken categories such as social class (see chapter 5). Other categories occasionally used by Western researchers such as "religiousness" (supposedly linked to increased opposition to French and therefore indirectly to the promotion of English, cf. subsection 4.2.1), not only did not appear in my participants' explanations nor practices, but their very construct is inherently Western-centric.

[17] Student don't even make the difference between… It's like the CELTA Manager…

4.4 Conclusion

Within an Algerian context where politics comes to be debated through culture, comparisons with French and an emphasis on "neutrality" and foreign-ness mean that participants tend to view English as unrelated to 'the voice of colonialism or neo-colonialism' (Higgins, 2009, p. 37), and the imposition of political, economic or linguistic norms from abroad as less threatening. In my participants' explanations, English is appropriated as a means to an end, envisaged as resistance to the language of the coloniser and all it indexes, from neo-colonialism to elite closure and a loss of identity. By not being explicitly associated with colonisation, English somehow appears as "neutral", in the sense of being an instrument to bypass existing socio-cultural debates. While it is always a highly artificial exercise to ask respondents directly about their attitudes towards certain named languages or their motivations behind learning them, talking about others' motivations for learning English highlighted discourses of English as importance to the nation, symbolising a movement backwards for some (to a more "authentic" past without traces of French colonisation) and forwards to a future highly connected Algerian identity.

This chapter represents a dialogue between different conceptualisations of "English in Algeria", bringing together my participants' explanatory frames in conversation with each other and with my own commentary. These frames could appear at first to contain "contradictory" elements, such as descriptions of the number of English speakers increasing and of English being absent, of the language being both considered prestigious and weird, or of its popularity because it is simultaneously "against French" and "neutral". I argue that the apparent contradictions stem from the fact that wider discourses regarding identities, political and social equality, relations to others and the world, and race, are partly relocalised into discourses about English (rather than into English). Talking about English should be read alongside and within existing debates on history, belonging and political priorities, rather than simply taken as straightforward assessments of language change.

Discourses can feed motivation and justifications, and this particular understanding of English was particularly present in group interviews, especially in large groups. English is described as important for the country and the economy, but discourses of national importance did not often translate into discourses of personal motivation. None of the participants mentioned "replacing French" (or an equivalent) as a reason for their own learning or use of English when interviewed on their own or in small groups, even though they might have referred to this discourse when I met them in a large group setting before or after the interview. The following chapter will discuss the personal aspects of what English means to my participants, why and how they learn and use it, and how the personal and the national intersect.

Chapter 5

English for the self: mobility and immobility

5.1 Introduction

I was invited to El Oued originally to give a talk on languages and employability in Algeria, as part of a career fair organised by the US-funded career centre attached to the town's university. I was subsequently asked to deliver two additional workshops on CVs and interview skills in English, although neither practices are commonly found in that language in Algeria, even for work in multinationals. My notes immediately after the event record how about half of the students attending came from the English department, with a further third studying Engineering and other STEM subjects, and the remainder from Psychology or Sociology. While all of the young women studying English were interested in working in schools and teaching, male students or female students from other disciplines wanted to continue in their fields, switch to marketing or work for a multinational company, whatever the sector. I was curious to understand what had drawn them to the workshops, as the vast majority would never need to write a CV in English nor participate in an interview in the language. In discussions throughout and after, the students talked about wanting to know about CVs and how to get a job, but also how to learn English, even though they were not always quite sure why they wanted to learn (fieldnotes 19/09/17). Although the language in which the workshop was delivered was to a certain extent irrelevant to them, the fact that it had been advertised as delivered "in English" and "by a foreigner" was a significant attraction in that it indexed a rare (and prestigious) opportunity.

These notes are but one example of how personal motivations and curiosity around English appear bound to representations of the language as tied to employability, a key concern for many young people (and for international funders), as well as its indexing of mobility, movement and change. Although the exact connections between language learning, or attending a workshop in English, and their

own life choices were not always explicated by participants, English was perceived as prestigious and opening opportunities, increasing the attraction of such events and stimulating further narratives of the inherently positive effects of the language.

This chapter illustrates how English has become an object of competition to demonstrate social differentiation and therefore a form of symbolic capital (Swartz, 1997, p. 173). English proficiency is a currency with which to enhance symbolic capital, in Bourdieu's sense of 'particular resources that individuals have access to, which can be invested or exchanged for goods - tangible or otherwise' (Burke et al., 2018, p. 2), as well as a signifier of one's enhanced location within the social hierarchy. It is used as a shorthand to denote economic, social and spatial mobility, and embodies an enabling and gatekeeping mechanism to these interrelated mobilities. Increasing one's symbolic capital through the learning of English thus opens up possibilities of movement, both in terms of geography and social hierarchy, which would remain inaccessible otherwise. Language in this case is not directly the embodiment of the power struggle between different social groups, as "English" is talked about rather than used. Its symbolic value on the linguistic market is therefore defined as much by the other forms of capital it indexes as the actual opportunities it might offer. Forms of capital include economic (wealth), social (connections and networks), and cultural (diploma, knowledge of norms).

Despite the positive discourses about increased opportunities for all, this chapter also demonstrates that English's entanglement with other forms of capital in fact reinforces existing social hierarchies. Desires of mobility (spatial and social) are deemed more or less acceptable depending on the status of the speaker, and accessible only to some. Although very few of my participants ever explicitly mentioned class, English is closely linked with different representations of present social hierarchies. It is a tool to develop social, economic and cultural capital, in the hope of bettering one's position within society, but remains dependent upon existing levels of these forms of capital rather than creating new fields. Unlike the discourses of neutrality and comparison with French analysed in chapter 4, this set of discourses focus on individual mobility, thereby often obscuring the wider social factors as play.

5.2 Spatial mobility

5.2.1 Temporary

English is seen as key to temporary spatial mobility, from travelling to internships and training abroad. Discourses around English insist on the language as a means to seize opportunities which would not have been available through other linguistic practices. One of my conversations with English teachers based at a university's language centre in the West of Algeria highlights some of the key words and processes through which English is equated with movement. I had been introduced to Ilyès, one of the senior teachers, who showed me the centre and explained their work before introducing me to two of his colleagues, who were recent graduates. As part of our conversation on their studies and work so

far, Sarah and Inès exclaimed that 'English opens so much opportunities to the world outside… and to go outside, not just teaching!' (fieldnotes 06/12/17). Having overheard their comment, Ilyès added that although he agreed that English was the 'language of opportunities', this was also a discourse used by language teachers to motivate their students, who often had lost any interest for English through middle and high school (fieldnotes 06/12/17). Teachers, having worked hard to develop their language skills, were keen to demonstrate that they had benefited from their learning. Systematically presenting English as door-opening thus functioned both to present themselves in a positive light (as people with increased opportunities) and to encourage dismissive or despondent learners. The notion of a self-justifying and self-perpetuating discourse should be kept in mind throughout, as individuals exhort the increased potential stemming from their expanded linguistic repertoire.

One of the opportunities, supported by the discourse of English as the international language, is that of using English for tourism and holidays abroad. Sarah and Inès talked about English as 'the common language outside' (fieldnotes 06/12/17) and several second-year master's students in the English department, when asked about what they wanted to do with their language skills, answered that they wanted to travel (fieldnotes 11/12/17). At a Q&A session following presentation of my data in one of the science-focused universities in Algiers, students' first response to 'why are Algerians learning and using English' was tourism (fieldnotes 25/09/17). As mentioned in section 3.4.1, Meriem associated the language with "abroad" and interactions with foreigners. In her longer answer below, she recounts a personal anecdote but also explains that the new trends in tourism have boosted the attractiveness of English for a younger generation keen to see "new horizons" and be able to communicate beyond the certificates:

> Mais sinon je dirais que mon anglais m'a beaucoup servi, par exemple lorsque j'ai failli me perdre quand je me rendais aux Etats-Unis, j'étais très contente de parler anglais et même mes enfants m'ont dit "bravo Maman, grâce à toi on s'est pas perdu!" parce que tout était en anglais, c'était au niveau de l'aéroport de Frankfurt, tout était informatisé, ils avaient mis des informations et l'opératrice parlait en anglais, donc j'étais très contente. Je dirais que l'anglais… et beaucoup d'Algériens sont en train de s'y mettre! Parce qu'il y a beaucoup d'écoles qui se développent dans ce sens et qui dispensent des niveaux de formation, qui rentrent dans le Cadre Commun Européen, ou alors généralement ce que les jeunes étudiants, les jeunes recherchent, c'est "conversation". Pour pouvoir se débrouiller donc à l'étranger, lors de leurs voyages, maintenant ça commence, on commence à avoir des destinations un peu… comment est-ce qu'on peut appeler ça… exotiques? Comme la Thaïlande, la Chine…[1] (interview 23/02/17).

[1]But otherwise I would say that my English was very useful to me, for example when I nearly got lost as I was travelling to the US, I was very pleased to be able to speak English and even my children sayd to me "well done Mum, thanks to you we didn't get lost!" because everything was in English, it was when we were in Frankfurt airport, everything was electronic, they had all the information up and the operator was talking in English, so I was very happy. I would say that English… And many Algerians are getting into it! Because there are a lot of schools opening and which deliver training levels according to the Common European Framework, or generally even what you students, young people look for, it's "conversation". In order to be able to get by abroad, on their travels, now it's starting, we start seeing some destinations… how can we call this… exotic destinations? Like Thailand, China…

Enmeshed with discourses of the upheavals linked to globalisation and new technologies, confidence in English becomes a metonymy for a new generation, mobile, connected, with cash to spend and keen to explore the world beyond "traditional" destinations such as France.

Although many teaching staff employed in universities across the country talk about having travelled to the UK and sometimes the US, "holidays" was not prevalent as an answer in individual interviews. One possible reason is that common travel destinations mentioned in conversations included France, Spain, Turkey and the Gulf, where the majority of people used their knowledge of French (in France and Spain) and Arabic (in Turkey and the Gulf) to communicate. In addition, holidaying abroad is a marker of social and economic status, as costs are high and some visas (such as to the UK) not only prohibitively expensive but also refused on a whim. Many participants expressed frustration towards iniquitous visa procedures, and resentment towards certain countries seen as particularly arbitrary in their visa refusals (the UK being seen as one of the worst offenders). While this was mostly manifested through personal stories, the issue has also occasionally been highlighted in the British press (Hill, 2018). Although participants often talked about English as important for tourism, it appeared to be reproducing a discourse commonly found in textbooks and language centres rather than corresponding to actual practices.

The narrative of new destinations and mobility is even more pronounced in the association of English with professional opportunities, as learning the language is equated to increased possibilities of international training, professional development or participation in conferences. In this extract, Hicheme, a Pharmacy student from Algiers, discusses how languages are intertwined with spatial mobility and work:

> English helped me go to the US and Japan, without English it would have been difficult for me to help them. I was really excited to go, I only want to learn about Japan, I'm not that interested in the US or the UK. But when I live in the US I don't want to be with Algerians, I want to learn more about the culture…without losing myself, but meeting different people… (…) My sister is in Canada, she was in the US two years on a Fulbright scholarship, got married and moved to Canada. She didn't particularly want to go there. She studied at the INELEC and now her work is all in English so sometimes when she texts me she makes mistakes in French. We don't speak in English together though, we never have, it's always French and derja. (…) I want to do my PhD in France or Germany or the US because they're the best at it, but I'm not attracted to France particularly, it's just about how good they are at my technical field. (interview 13/12/16)

Hicheme broached several themes commonly found in other interviews: the association of learning English with possibilities of internships and scholarships abroad, and utilitarian rather than emotional attachment to the language.

Although participants referred to occasionally using English with their younger siblings, reported use indicates that it is mostly restricted to set phrases and sporadic longer performative exchanges. English is mostly a tool and a currency to access openings and rewards, and the vast majority of

individuals tend to base their choices on opportunities rather than on the language in and of itself (Meriem is an example of the few exceptions, as she based her career choices on the possibility to practise her language skills). Nacer, Lilia and Nour, who work for multinationals and international organisations, and Salma, a recruiter from Southern Algeria, all stressed that going to training and conferences abroad was a perk of their job, but only open to them because of their ability of speak English (interviews on 12/10/17, 18/02/17, 03/11/15 and 17/09/17). Accounts of personal experience were supplemented by evidence of business practices, as described here by Meriem in the case of a large state-owned company:

> M: Puis ensuite je suis passée à la Direction de la Formation, où là aussi j'ai été très contente de ne pas perdre mon anglais, parce que justement nous avons le contact avec les organismes étrangers, avec lesquels nous travaillons beaucoup (…)
>
> CJ: Et donc ce sont des organismes qui font aussi des formations?
>
> M: Ils font des formations dans le cadre international et donc on y prend part soit en envoyant des cadres, soit…justement c'est un point très important que vous avez soulevé là…c'est un point important dans le sens où, souvent les personnes que nous envoyons…on requiert d'elles un certain niveau en langue anglaise, parce que les formations sont dispensées en langue anglaise alors il faut suivre les séminaires, tout ça. Sinon nous organisons aussi des formations sur site pour les gens qui n'ont pas un très bon niveau en anglais, et donc à ce moment-là on demande à ce qu'un formateur soit si possible francophone, la documentation est en anglais mais la formation se déroule en langue française avec toute la documentation en anglais…[2] (interview with Meriem, Head of Professional Development at a state-owned company 23/02/17).

As mobility is a prized aspect of employment in large organisations, the gatekeeping role of English towards opportunities for training abroad is important in linking discourses of prestige, enjoyment and opportunities.

English also mediates and signifies personal rather than professional opportunities for mobility. One of the draws of participating in international student organisations such as AIESEC is the possibility of teaching abroad for two weeks to three months, and members spoke enthusiastically of their time in Poland, Morocco, Italy, Russia or Lithuania (fieldnotes 27/05/17, 04/06/17, 18/09/17). As 'English speakers', the teaching volunteers benefit from free food and accommodation, help with visa procedures and the opportunity to spend time abroad. In this extract, Feryel analyses how her brother's experience of a US-funded leadership programme led her to connect English with exchanges, travelling

[2] M: Then I went to the Training Department, where again I was very pleasure not to lose my English, because we were in contact with foreign organisations with which we would work a lot with (…)

CJ: And so these are organisations which also organise training?

M: They organise training events within an international framework and so we take part either by sending managers, or… actually it's a very important point you're raising here… It's an important point in the sense that often the people we send… we require them to have a certain level in English, because these training programmes are often in English and you have to follow the workshops, everything. Otherwise we also organise training on-site for people who don't have a very high level in English, and so for this we ask that the trainer be French-speaking if possible, the documents will be in English but training takes place in French with the documents in English…

and self-development:

> Et c'est mon frère qui a fait… il a fait droit. Droit c'est arabe. Ensuite quand il a vu ses amis ils ont parlé de leur expérience, "on a représenté notre culture, on a échangé notre culture…" "comment ça, comment vous avez pu faire ça?". Ils ont dit "est-ce que tu maîtrises l'anglais?" Oui, c'est toujours…l'anglais. C'est toujours le pont que vous devez traverser. Alors qu'est-ce qu'il a fait: il a refait le bac. Il a fait anglais comme spécialité, après trois ans, il a participé, il a vu et il nous a ramené des photos, ce qu'ils ont fait, des événements, it was an exchange programme, it's all about democracy and leadership. Ca m'a encouragé. A chaque fois…a successful story motivates me to improve my English level, to speak in English…[3] (interview 15/03/17)

The 'successful story' was his transformation from a run-of-the-mill student to someone who had travelled, 'seen', exchanged and been an 'ambassador' for his culture, seemingly only mediated and facilitated by language learning. There is an overlap between the benefits of participation in international organisations and learning English, with the latter considered 'le pont que vous devez franchir' although the former is also mediating access.

Therefore, individuals' motivation to learn and use English is closely connected to its symbolic value as gatekeeper to opportunities, and that value accrues from wider discourses of English as the language of "abroad" and globalisation, as well as the discourses of social mobility discussed later in this chapter. English language skills are described as a boon to individuals eager to travel and seize opportunities for training, internships and further study in different settings, but also as a barrier to accessing these opportunities.

5.2.2 Desire to leave

The stories of Hicheme's family are but one example of English being equated not only to migration opportunities but to the very notion of "abroad", coming to signify geographical mobility both in temporary and more permanent terms. Participants highlighted how they had relocalised some of their practices which they linked to studying and working "elsewhere" into English.

English is described as the main gatekeeping mechanism to accessing 'bigger dreams', which are to be found abroad. In the extract below (partly quoted in subsection 3.3.3), Hicheme concludes that his friends either will regret or have already come to regret not having learnt English:

> I have a lot of friends, I told them "don't wait until you finish your studies to learn English because you're going to regret it" And they said "no no I'm cool with that, I'm ok" and

[3] And it's my brother who did…he did law. Law it's in Arabic. Then when he saw his friends they all talked about their experience "we represented our culture, we shared our culture…" "what do you mean, how did you get to do that?" They said "do you master English?" Yes, it's always… English. It's always the bridge you need to cross. Then what did he do: he took his bac again. He chose English as his speciality, after three years he took part, he saw and he brought us some photos back, what they did, events, *it was an exchange programme, it's all about democracy and leadership.* It encouraged me. Every time…*a successful story motivates me to improve my English level, to speak in English…*

> when they finished their studies, they realised they have bigger dreams, for example I had a friend who wanted to go to the Emirates, he's an architect, and he couldn't go there because he can't speak English. (interview 13/12/16)

Similarly, at a career fair in the South-East of the country, students from different disciplines (including languages, business and accountancy) asked me (as someone from a British university) how they could go to the UK to work, regularly framing their questions as 'a dream' or 'a goal'. Professors from the English department at the same university also commented that their students were attracted to the language because they had seen others find job opportunities in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Emirates or Europe through their language skills (fieldnotes 18-19/09/17). Not learning English is equated to losing opportunities and closing doors, with higher wages, desirable employment and mobility all indexed by the idea of knowing English. For (privileged) young people like Hicheme, who have had the chance to travel and work in Japan and the US, English not only enabled their mobility in and of itself but through it the possibility of achieving 'bigger dreams'. Whether similar positions could not be obtained within Algeria or their location abroad made them inherently more attractive was often unclear in participants' responses, but contributed to English being used as a metonymy to indicate access to prestigious spatial mobility.

Furthermore, desire for mobility is not always expressed in terms of a concrete professional project but often expressed in terms of "just leaving". One of the first things that Chaima, a first-year science student in Algiers, told me when I met her at the end of a Maths class was that 'everybody wants to leave. Or at least, everybody wants to study abroad, and you need English to do that, even to go to France' (fieldnotes 11/10/17). Students such as Chaima are already in a privileged position, studying at one of the best universities of the country, with relatively high employment rates upon graduation and (theoretically at least) confident in both French and Standard Arabic as medium of instruction as a result of their schooling. Even so, "leaving" is an attractive option, with competency in English presented as the enabler of vague desires of mobility. In my discussion with Meriem, she explained having learnt English in order to leave Algeria, before her experience of the Mancunian weather dissuaded her:

> CJ: Ah oui, les gens peuvent voyager… C'était aussi votre objectif quand vous avez commencé l'anglais?
>
> M: Oui, oui. C'était mon objectif, c'était de l'utiliser, de partir d'ici au départ mais bon, quand j'ai fait un stage d'été à l'université de Salford, Manchester. C'était [indistinct] parce que ce qui m'avait découragé c'était le temps brumeux. [laughs][4] (interview 23/02/17)

Learning English for the general goal of mobility also impacted on the ways people chose to practise and use the language. In this extract, Lounès describes how he can tell which of his students are compelled to learn by their company and which are interesting in leaving, because their relation to the language extends beyond the classroom into a more personal one:

> L: You know, I feel like people who…like they speak, even if they speak the language of

[4]CJ: Ah ok, people can travel… It was also your objective when you started English?
M: Yes, yes. It was my objective, it was to use it, to leave here at first, but, well, when I did a summer school at the University of Salford, Manchester. It was [indistinct] because what discouraged me it was the foggy weather. [laughs]

> movies and songs they are somehow…professional. They are confusing words. But those who speak the language now they feel like… they want to show even the personality of the language they are using..of the movies, the way how they dress, and they articulate, they move, they use hands… the same way… I think they are imitating some people.
> CJ: Do you think that the cultural aspect is stronger now? For younger students?
> L: Yeah. You know in terms of people who are having classes. In terms of people who are having classes, maybe it's to teach, maybe it's to…but it's professional. But those who are heading to movies they want to apply… Mostly they want to go to the countries of the language. Not to teach, just to… to leave.
> CJ: Ok. So they want to go….elsewhere. And the dream would be…
> L: But people learn a language from movies…they speak better than the people who attend classes. Because they seem like they enjoy it, listening to music in English, they enjoy watching movies, and the listening part here, is much more than the listening part in actual classes. Because those who are having classes they only rely on the teacher to bring the material. For those who learn from movies and whatever, they are free, they listen and they watch and they think all the time. (interview 14/03/17)

Lounès's experience stems from teaching both in private language schools and within a university setting and his distinction between learning methods echo themes of technology and the new generation analysised in subsection 3.5.2. He also raises the 'personality of the language' and 'imitating people' as being signs of not just learning English for professional reasons but wanting to 'apply'. In this particular case, applying the language is equated to mobility and being abroad, reinforcing language ideologies of foreign-ness and native speakerism, and demonstrating how these narratives are enmeshed with discourses of generations, employability, mobility and self-improvement.

The association between English and countries such as the US or the UK is particularly strong for some participants, and appears in answers about "leaving" rather than searching for specific job opportunities. Zohra, an Architecture professor who taught in universities in the East and West of the country, recounted how her niece was the only one in her family who spoke English, sometimes even sending her birthday texts in English even though her aunt then asked her to translate it to French or derja. Zohra's friend had gone to New York to work as a translator, and her niece was 'jalouse parce qu'elle va rester là-bas parce qu'elle [her niece] veut aussi partir' [5] (conversation 07/12/17). Similarly, for Halima, an English trainee teacher in Algiers, leaving was a goal in and of itself 'because if you're sad, it's better to cry in Miami' (fieldnotes 14/01/17). English skills in accounts such as Zohra's and Halima's are emptied of their language content and transformed into a metonymy of "elsewhere". The US and the UK (and to a lesser extent, Canada) represent particular embodiments of this "elsewhere", because of their strong visual presence in cultural production rather than due to specific linguistic or even cultural features. The omnipresence of some locations in popular culture (whether film, series or music) has interrelated narratives of freedom, comfort and wealth with where they are created or set. For Halima, Zohra's niece and many other participants, these destinations evoked a better

[5] jealous that she will stay there because she [the niece] wants to leave too

life (even when crying) without necessarily relating to the specificities of daily life there. None of the participants talked about wanting to experience specific aspects of New York, Miami or London, and they did not exhibit any particular curiosity towards British or North American history, cultures or social life. In all Q&A sessions conducted with young people and in conversations with teachers at universities and language schools, the questions were about the procedures of immigration and not about how others lived. Although the type of questions encountered could reflect the fact that students felt they already knew the locations or had access to information through family members in the diaspora, the construction of "abroad" and "mobility" through English strongly indexes the general "glow" or impressions gleaned from cultural representations. "English" can symbolise leaving "here" more than going "there".

Nevertheless, it would be simplistic to conclude that English is the only language indexing mobility. For the Head of the English Department at a Western University, 'everybody wants to leave', but English was only one of the linguistic tools, with Turkish also a common choice, made even more attractive by the appeal of Turkish culture as seen through popular soap operas (interview 13/12/17, also fieldnotes 25/02/17, 02/10/17). My own fieldnotes include this entry after an afternoon discussing with students organising a career fair in the South East of the country. Although this particular entry was from the South East, the symbolic correlation between language and mobility for some languages more than others was repeated across all my field sites:

> There is this interest for going away. I was asking about whether students were learning other languages. They were saying they're learning German in order to go to Germany and study there. Whereas Spanish it's just because they like it and the sound of it. They say it sounds cool. (fieldnotes 19/09/17)

Over the course of the few months I spent with them, trainee teachers in Algiers expressed their desire to use the languages they were learning in order to move. Out of the thirty students I regularly interacted with, two were learning Korean and hoping to travel to East Asia, and five were learning Turkish through series, of which three wanted to live in Turkey. One student had been learning Spanish and had only selected English as it was not possible to pursue the former at the ENS, and was hoping to work in Spain or South America, even though she did not think this likely. Within this particular group, none of them ever expressed any interest in migrating to an English-speaking country, despite the fact that this was the language they were studying and getting ready to teach. Similarly, following a two and a half hour group interview at the "American Corner"[6] of a university in the Sahara, several students approached me to ask whether I spoke any other languages, and to tell me how they had been learning respectively German, Russian and Japanese in the hope of studying or working abroad (fieldnotes 14/03/17).

Discourses around English as the language of mobility and opportunities are extremely powerful in a context where comments such as 'they all want to leave, get a scholarship. They think it's

[6]American Corners are generally hosted by universities. The US Embassy provides multi-media materials about the US as well as information about education and cultural programmes, and the spaces are often used for regular events and workshops.

better elsewhere'[7] are commonplace. Wider narratives of English as "the international language" reinforce the idea of languages as facilitators of spatial mobility, and both feeds from and back into stories of educational failure and individual success. The latter is facilitated by descriptions of independent learning through TV, music and online materials by many participants as denoting individual motivation and drive. If English is the "language of opportunities", then young people can achieve their "bigger dreams" by following the language. "Leaving" in this context means to improve one's status in life, reaching towards the opportunities and comfort promised by cultural production and discourses of the spread of English, with spatial and social mobilities subtly intertwined. Rather than spreading, English is becoming the medium and space where discourses of mobility for a certain segment of the population (professionals, students, higher education staff…) are relocalised.

5.3 Social mobility

5.3.1 Transforming hierarchies through language

Prevalent discourses around English associate learning the language with moving not only in a geographical sense, but also a social sense, as "English" becomes a symbolic currency to increase economic, social and cultural capital. Discourses of English as the gatekeeper of "bigger dreams" is not only found when discussing spatial mobility but also in terms of reaching out to new contacts and new audiences, presenting better selves to the world. It indexes the possibility of acquiring new social capital through completely "new" connections and the articulation of global, national and personal development.

Ayoub, a postgraduate student at Tlemcen university, pointed to Spanish students at his institution who were also learning English online because 'they feel the need to learn a universal language, a lingua franca' (interview on 05/12/17). English not only afforded them more personal prestige but also was seen as the most appropriate language to use on social media and to connect with new people because it was perceived as more common and equally foreign to all. Such accounts of individual behaviours echo the new patterns of belonging analysed in subsection 4.2.2 as well as exemplifying the interweaving of discourses of universality, social media and prestige around English. Discourses around English thus stress its importance in enhancing social capital through the building of new networks and new audiences, but although seemingly entirely turned to the "outside", both are performative and destined to impact the domestic setting as well as the international one. As anecdotes surrounding the founding of an online radio or the broadcast of the award ceremony indicate (cf. subsection 4.2.2), presenting an English-speaking self is also considered inherently good, and a crucial element of showcasing Algeria and Algerians to the world. Being perceived as not being competent in English is implicitly equated to an indignity, and the intertwining of this narrative with questions of self-improvement and elite closure are discussed later in this chapter.

[7] This particular wording is from a conversation with Ilyès.

Discourses of English as global, foreign and new underlie hopes of English transforming social hierarchies by providing more inclusive and forgiving language ideologies. Conceptualisations of the French language in Algeria, as an expression of one's socio-political status depending on "mastery" of a recognisable exogenous standard (Dourari, 2003, pp. 8–24), are expressly contrasted to English's perceived egalitarian neutrality. Described as easier because having fewer rules and a higher tolerance for mistakes, it is appropriated as a neutral means of communication between Algerians. For example, Olivier and Lylia, who work for the same multinational but were interviewed separately, both mentioned that many of their colleagues wrote their emails in English, even when communicating with other North African offices where employees' shared repertoires also included Arabic and French. Having the email in English not only meant that it could be forwarded to anyone in the company without needing to be rewritten, but most importantly (as the vast majority of emails would never be forwarded to anyone outside the region) was seen as levelling. They all considered themselves as learners in this language, whereas expression in French would have been scrutinised and any error labelled as indicative of a lack of education or intelligence (fieldnotes 05/07/17 and interview 12/10/17). Writing in French was more threatening because language ideologies linking accuracy and social status translated to any mistake being judged harshly and reflecting badly on the personal itself. English meanwhile is considered equally foreign to all and therefore could contribute to dismantling socio-cultural hierarchies enacted through French. In my conversation with Hicheme, an undergraduate Pharmacy student who had done a placement in North America the previous year, he stressed that:

> I try to speak English and it doesn't matter if I make mistakes, that's how you learn, I don't care what people think. (…) People are very friendly and polite in the US, they don't mind if you make mistakes, but when working with this French company they are rude and they think they are better than you. (interview 13/12/16)

English is therefore constructed in connection with a more inclusive and egalitarian language ideology not in itself but compared to French.

Nevertheless, discourses of English as the "universal language", not linked to or belonging to its British or North American historical centres, are reproduced concurrently with discourses of ethnicity and race tying native speakers of English to whiteness (cf. subsection 4.3.2). As in many settings where English was not the language of the coloniser, both local discourses and the messages from the global English Language Teaching (ELT) industry simultaneously celebrate English's diffuse ownership and the higher status of some "native speakers". Despite discourses pointing to the fluidity of English norms, daily practices and glottopolitique uphold "correctness" in English, which then further reinforces expectations of mastery, purity and hierarchy of other language practices rather than challenging them. As seen in subsection 3.3.2 and subsection 3.3.3, exogenous standards and learning through listening to North American and British materials remain key to how the language is taught throughout the education system. Although participants I was meeting for the first time tended to speak monolingually, as I spent more time with them or saw them several times the discussions became more translingual, closer to how I could hear them speak when I was not part of the conversation.

Nonetheless, nearly all participants switched to speaking monolingually once I started recording, as if to mark the passage between formal and informal speech. Only one participant (Feryel) maintained her language practices consistently, to the extent that the recorded interview felt much more like a "normal" conversation. However, in our written messages on social media she tended to follow the boundaries of named languages much more closely. References to Algerian Arabic as "broken" and all African languages as "dialect" was common across all students of English, whether they had studied World Englishes, were writing their thesis on Nigerian literature, or had only ever focused on the UK and the US. Parity of esteem was only extended to certain (Inner Circle) varieties of English. In fact, appropriation, playfulness, reconstruction of norms, translanguaging happen mostly with French, and only with English on a much smaller scale, because it is restricted to an elite practice and remains "weird" in the streets (subsection 4.3.1). "English" is not a bona fide solution to closed linguistic systems and exclusionary language ideologies. As with social mobility, practices reinforce hierarchisation rather than challenge it.

Despite the relative "absence" of English in the country and its status as a foreign language rather than a domestic lingua franca, it represents a means to enhance one's social capital through broadening one's horizons and building new connections beyond existing networks. Social capital, or 'aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to (...) membership in a group' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 254). This notions of "opening up" to the world is particularly important after the 1990s, as the dark decade is described as a time of being both cut off from and abandoned by the rest of the world. Attitudes and motivations around learning and using English are less straightforward than the triumphant discourses of the transformative effects of the international language. Existing exclusionary language ideologies and practices are adapted and relocalised into English, frequently in an effort to maintain prestige and symbolic capital. Discourses around English combine the rhetoric of inclusion and neutrality with highly racialised practices reinforcing white privilege and native speakerism, delegitimising Algerian users of English.

5.3.2 Employability

The notion of social connections and hierarchies is especially important as many students are demotivated by the high unemployment rates of graduates, and look for tools to improve their situation. Ma3rifa (see subsection 4.2.2) and "having wide shoulders"[8] are considered paramount in finding a job, and discourses around employability have partly been relocalised to being in and about English. Some, like Lounès, take a radical view, equating not speaking English with unemployment:

> We have to. Yeah. We have to learn English because we need to work. No English, no profession. (interview 14/03/17)

As discussed in this subsection, not all participants share Lounès's views, and discourses around employability are not always about English per se but also conducted through English, for instance in the delivery of international cooperation programmes on skills or employability.

[8] An Algerian expression meaning having a lot of connections and therefore influence

During my fieldwork, I came across three internationally-funded projects focusing on employability, all of which were directly or indirectly tied to the English language. While none of them promoted English as the key to immediate employment, running the workshops partly or mostly in English, using English terminology, and having English-speaking partners contributed to situating discourses on employability within global discourses of English as and for development (see for instance Park, 2011; Park and Wee, 2012; Seargeant and Erling, 2011). Unemployment rates of young graduates are a key concern for the government, with many national and international programmes focusing on this area. The lack of job opportunities for young people is nothing new, and was already discussed throughout the 1990s and 2000s as a "structural problem" impacting negatively on the whole of society (Boukhari, 2001).

Furthermore, discourses about English and employability in Algeria are shaped by how "English" is constructed within security and development discourses. International funders expressed clearly to me that funding language programmes was a step towards tackling the high rates of joblessness amongst young people and thereby supposedly bringing political stability (fieldnotes 05/10/16, 18-19/10/16, 06/11/17). The idea that political stability is linked to English via employability echoes the global 'projectisation of English Language Teaching'[9] (Widin, 2010) and unquestioned assumptions of English as equal to economic development and social mobility (Seargeant & Erling, 2011). Since 9/11 especially, promoting English language teaching has been viewed in American and British policy circles as a key tool in 'eradicating the seeds of Islamic terrorist activity' (Karmani, 2005, p. 264). Speakers are viewed in monolingual terms, with one language equated to one worldview, Arabic being fundamentally violent whereas English 'is exclusively endowed to promote the values of freedom, democracy, justice, openness, tolerance, decency, and so forth' (Karmani, 2005, p. 265). Essentialist and triumphalist narratives of English are not new, and are encapsulated in Paul Johnson's pronouncement in 2003 that 'a more secure world will be legislated for, policed, and adjudicated in English' (quoted in Karmani, 2005, p. 265). In Algeria, whether the chain of assumptions between English, individual choices and structural conditions is a result of a pragmatic choice or deeply held belief from international partners is unclear. Under anonymity, some participants mentioned that protecting and justifying their funding allocation from Congress and Parliament, where members are more receptive to narratives of enhancing security and reducing immigration, required them to frame all projects in terms of security. While an in-depth study of international programming and the construction of "security" and "development" through English was outside the scope of this thesis, interviews and participant observation point to how discourses of English as employability are appropriated differently and within different frames of meaning by different actors.

English also becomes equated with a certain understanding of globalisation, whether in terms of widening horizons or of uncertain global forces. One common example of this theme is professionals who are taking English lessons because of pressure from their company. Sami and Mohamed, both consultants in training hospitals in the West of Algeria, explained that they were getting classes

[9]Projectisation here refers to the organisation and delivery of ELT programmes as part of "development" projects and underlying processes, including the commodification of language and privileging donors' interests over local needs.

through work but 'c'est pas un choix'[10] (fieldnotes 08-09/03/17). The idea that English was "the international language" or the "universal language" was mentioned by all participants across all sites, and contributed to discourses about jobs and linguistic needs which had previously been entirely in French to now also be relocalised to English.

Although Lounès's comment would seem to indicate that bacheliers choose English in order to increase their chances of finding a job, the situation is more complex. As a graduate from an English department who originally wanted to work as a translator[11], before turning to teaching and marketing, Djallil relates that the vast majority of his peers either did not know what they would do after their studies, or had not even thought about it:

> CJ: So thinking back on the people who did the course with you, did they want it for a specific job or were they just interested in the language?
>
> D: Well, to be honest with you… many didn't know what they would do it, and didn't know what job they would want. Because university in Algeria, except for some very specific strands, like chemistry or mechanical engineering or architecture… Many students actually go through the degree and then try to find a job after they finish. They see what opportunities basically it will bring them. So it was a bit messy. Actually many people who were studying English with us they didn't speak the language. It was just about taking tests and writing essays.
>
> CJ: Ok. So then they would just go through the motions…
>
> D: Yes, exactly. That's true. But for me, I wasn't in the same position. I did, I wanted to do translation. And then when I didn't have it I switched my focus to English. (interview on 05/09/17)

Djallil's classmates who 'didn't know what job they would want' and were just going through the motions before 'see[ing] what opportunities basically it will bring them' are not isolated examples, and echo the responses I heard from students in English departments. On the other side of the country, Salma also talked about how she started acting as a mentor and career counsellor to many language graduates who did know what to do with the degrees after graduation (conversation 17/09/17). Studying English is sometimes seen as an acceptable alternative when high school leavers do not obtain high enough bac averages to study the most prized disciplines: Pharmacy, Medicine, and STEM subjects (fieldnotes 19/11/16, 04/07/17, 17/09/17). Requirements depend on the year and the universities, as they are based on demand, and are not published nationally. From conversations with graduates and lecturers, the bac average required for English for the past five years seems to hover around 12-13/20, compared to 15-16/20 for Medicine and Pharmacy, and 10-11/20 for Arabic or History. Graduating with an English degree is more attractive than other disciplines but only a small minority of the students currently in English departments enter with a clear idea of what they could do with their certification.

[10] it's not a choice

[11] In Algeria, translation and foreign languages have so far been in two separate departments and therefore constituted two entirely unconnected courses, with the former being the most prestigious. There are plans to transform translation into a postgraduate-only course, but this has not been enacted yet.

Discourses around English as employability focus not on English students per se but on other graduates who seek employment with multinationals. For Amina, who runs a language school, the conflation of discourses of employability and discourses about English is relatively new and feeds into wider discourses of novelty and sociolinguistic change:

> c'est récent, oui. L'anglais est plus demandé que le français, et les gens maintenant ils ont dans l'idée que si jamais on veut aller..si on veut faire une grande carrière il faut viser l'anglais plus que le français. Ces dernières années.[12] (interview 12/02/17)

Adults of all ages who made use of the American Cultural Centre in Algiers, whether by attending workshops or using the resources, also argued that it was economic interest which drew them to English. Staff and volunteers who helped run the centre confirmed that attendees regularly claimed that they needed English for work, especially 'managers who need English because of foreign companies' (fieldnotes 06/06/17, 03/07/17, 05/09/17). Highly desirable jobs in multinationals, with higher salaries and prestige, are accessible only through demonstrating "English". The idea that English holds the key to these sought-after positions impacts on the provision offered in language schools and the kind of clients they attract:

> CJ: Do the adults explain why they're interested in the English lessons at all?
>
> L: Yeah. Most people need [interrupted by colleague walking in] They like to learn English because they feel like they need English for their position. Mostly people who work in different positions they come to learn English. They are new employees but they hope to learn the language because they feel like when they are working there's a gap in their… between them and their employer.
>
> CJ: Do most people… do they work in Ouargla?
>
> L: They work in Hassi Messaoud. They come… for me I teach a class and they are adults, they are engineers, they are working in international companies in Hassi Messaoud. They have special groups, they come one month they have intensive classes and when they leave the next month of work they just have homework, then they come to have the next level. (interview with Lounès, 14/03/17)

Although his school was located in a city nearly a hundred kilometres away from Hassi Messaoud, the adults who wanted to learn English all did so for professional reasons, and all worked in the same sector. Improving one's English means being able to get a job or a promotion, as otherwise there would be 'a gap' between employee and employers, with the idea that the employer is a foreigner hinted at in Lounès's answer.

English as the language of employability through contact with foreigners is also highlighted by his colleague Feryel:

> F: Mais on a toujours dans chaque spécialité y a un module d'anglais. D'ailleurs les termes juridiques, maintenant ils ont…c'est nouveau, ils ont fait un module traduction. Traduction des termes de l'arabe, français et anglais. Les termes juridiques. Donc comme ils

[12] it's recent, yes. English is more in demand than French, and people now they have this idea that if you want to go… if you want to have a big career you have to aim for English more than French. These last few years.

> travaillent au tribunal… Aussi, si vous voulez avoir une idée où est-ce qu'on peut utiliser l'anglais ici, c'est au tribunal. Les interprètes au tribunal.
>
> CJ: Pourquoi on a des interprètes vers l'anglais au tribunal?
>
> F: Qui? On a des sociétés étrangères ici, donc voici la relation. Sociétés étrangères, peut-être des fois ils ont des contrats à traduire, des problèmes de salaire, d'employés, et tout, donc ils ont toujours besoin de ça.
>
> CJ: Donc ça c'est très spécifique à Hassi, à Ouargla?
>
> F: Je pense que plus qu'à Alger. Parce que nous les sociétés étrangères sont installées au sud. Voilà, moi j'ai ma copine on a fait traduction, elle a un bureau de traduction, et elle me dit qu'elle est bien versée en langue française mais elle a besoin toujours de pratiquer l'anglais parce qu'on fait toujours des traductions et plus que les traductions c'est l'interprétariat, avec le procureur, avec le public, avec le présumé coupable, etc. L'interprète doit bien verser, surtout au sud, pour l'anglais.
>
> CJ: D'accord, donc surtout en interprétariat, alors, plutôt qu'en traduction…
>
> F: Même traduction. C'est des contrats, c'est des papiers, c'est la paperasse, c'est les étrangers, s'ils ont un problème…[13] (interview 15/03/17).

The need for English to communicate with one's employers, or to deal with foreigners, is particularly marked in cities located close to the oil fields and in the immediate vicinity of Hassi Messaoud, where most of the mutinationals have based their Algerian headquarters. As mentioned in subsection 3.4.2, most undergraduate courses now offer at least one module in English for Specific Purposes, with the expressed intent of facilitating employability, even if there is huge regional variation in the usefulness of these skills. Both Feryel and Lounès draw attention to the regional and sectorial differences in terms of language requirements: English might be key to employability with multinationals, but these are located mostly in certain Southern cities and in Algiers.

English might be needed in financial institutions, banking, big import-export companies in the capital, or for embassies or military officers, but then tuition was provided by their employers once they had been recruited rather than being part of the person specification (conversations with recruiters working in the South, West and capital, fieldnotes 15/02/17, 17/09/17, 05/12/17). In practice, this means that the employability benefits of speaking English are eclipsed by the need to demonstrate other

[13] But we always have in each discipline an English module. Actually judicial terminology now they have…it's new, they did a translation module. Translation from terminology in Arabic, French and English. Legal terminology. So as they work in court… Also, if you want to have an idea of where we use English here, it's in court. Interpreters in court.

CJ: Why are there interpreters in English in court?

F: Who? We have foreign companies here, so this is the link. Foreign companies, maybe sometimes they have contracts to translate, salary problems, employee problems, all that, so they always need to do that.

CJ: So is this specific to Hassi, to Ouargla?

F: I think more than in Algiers. Because foreign companies are located in the south. In fact, I have a friend we did translation, she has a translation business, and she told me she is well versed in the French language but she always needs to practise English because we always do translations, and even more than translations it's interpreting, with the prosecutor, with the audience, with the alleged offender, etc. The interpreter must be well versed, especially in the south, for English.

CJ: Ok, so especially in interpreting then, rather than translating…

F: Even translations. It's contracts, it's files, it's paperwork, it's foreigners, they have a problem.

competences and skills. When discussing their own career development, participants were much more likely to portray English as just one of many additional skills and competences that might help them. Even when it forms part of the person specification, it is far from essential or the only requirement: both Salma and Feryel pointed out that even oil and gas multinationals considered English one of the skills which could be learnt on the job through further development, and privileged technical skills and knowledge (conversation 17/09/17, interview 15/03/17). In another example, Meriem details the in-house English training which will be delivered to their existing staff, as it is not needed upon recruitment:

> CJ: Et pour vous quelles sont vraiment les priorités et les objectifs de la formation? Surtout la formation en langues, mais plus largement aussi.
>
> M: En langues? Notre objectif c'est d'amener la population [de la compagnie] à un niveau…donc pour parler en termes du cadre européen… donc d'amener les beginners à un niveau au moins intermediate. Il y a certains cadres qui ont un niveau déjà intermediate parce qu'ils ont eu… par exemple dans le technique, où ils ont toute la documentation en langue anglaise, ils sont ingénieurs et il y en a qui ont étudié en anglais donc cette population ne sera pas touchée. Et ce sera au niveau central, donc l'anglais commercial, comme je l'ai dit, négociations…[14] (interview 23/02/17)

English is considered as a skill to be developed as part of continuous professional development rather than an essential recruitment criteria. "English as employability" discourses are therefore more complex than simply an equation of language skills with increased chances of finding a job. Those discourses reinforce the success and exceptionality (because confident English language skills are perceived to be so rare) of the speaker, while obscuring other factors such as subject area, employment sector, and existing privileges such as living (or having relatives) in a major city, speaking a variety of French close to the standard Parisian, and the economic and social capital to hear about and participate in internships, employability programmes and recruitment drives.

Furthermore, English is not the only skills or language seen as giving employees an "edge" in being recruited or promoted:

> CJ [after Lounès said there was a high demand for Spanish]: Why do people…they need Spanish for?
>
> L: Because now… especially in Ouargla we have different companies like [indistinct]. it's a company that uses Spanish. They feel that they are special if they know Spanish, like they get to this company easily.
>
> CJ: That's the company that's building the tramway?

[14] And for you what are the priorities and objectives of the training? Especially the language training programmes, but also more widely.

M: In terms of language? Our objective is to bring the population [of the company] to a level… to speak in terms of the European framework… so to bring the *beginners* to at least an *intermediate* level. There are managers who already have an *intermediate* level because they've had… for instance in technical departments, where all their documentation is in English, they are engineers and some of them studied in English so this population won't be affected. And it will be centrally, so business English, as I said before, negotiations…

> L: Yeah. And even last year I had different learners of Spanish who were working in Alstom. They feel like if want to develop their positions they need to know Spanish.[15]
> CJ: So are they people who already speak French, Arabic and English, or do they speak… Arabic and learn French?
> L: Do you mean learners of French? Some you know in Algeria French is like Arabic. So mostly they know Arabic and French and they come to study Spanish.
> CJ: But they don't already know English and then add Spanish?
> L: Not today now. They know French and then… (interview 14/03/17)

Arabic and French remain "a given" in terms of job applications, and therefore English and other languages (in this case, Spanish) become a way of being 'special' and 'develop[ing] their positions'.

When asked directly about the "importance of English", participants echo existing research demonstrating that the language is considered important for the country's growth and for finding a job in a globalised economy (see also Euromonitor International, 2012). The ever-present narratives around the benefits of English shaped participants' understanding of English as a compulsory choice, even when this did not correlate with their own experience. Rabah, who is finishing his PhD in Engineering at a Western University, pithily summarises the intermingling of discourses which lead to the enthusiasm for English:

> I want to learn many languages, but I need to learn English first because of jobs and communicating with people. (conversation 04/12/17)

At first glance, the relocalisation of discourses of employability from French to English appear to reproduce global discourses. Bringing participants' voices in dialogue with each other shows both the relocalisation of these discourses and their limitations. Other forms of capital remain paramount, with English an additional marker of prestige, education and motivation rather than a way of bypassing other requirements.

5.3.3 Knowledge

One of the key mechanism of the construction of English as the language of employability and symbolic capital is its perception as expedient, efficient and closely linked to research and knowledge. Whereas previously French was described as the language of science in Algeria, this discourse is now shifting to "English". While the former remains the language of higher education for all science and medicine departments apart from the INELEC and a handful of private institutions, the latter is becoming a part of the discourse on scholarly learning and professional development. When I observed lessons in different language schools throughout the country, learners indicated that for them English was "the language of science", and while a minority of adults who learnt for professional reasons did so for day-to-day communication, the vast majority sought to access information (fieldnotes 30/04-01/05/16, 12/11/16, 07/02/17, 05/11/17).

[15] Alstom is a French company, and the link to Spanish is unclear.

Already in 1999, newly elected President Bouteflika apparently exclaimed 'it is unthinkable (…) to spend ten years studying pure sciences in Arabic when it would only take one year in English' (quoted in Benrabah, 2013, p. 75). After decades of Arabisation and political promotion of Arabic as an important part of cultural decolonisation, having the head of state stating indirectly that he did not believe that Arabic was the most efficient medium of instruction for the contemporary science classroom and that Algeria should embrace any language was a momentous proclamation. The choice of English as the language of comparison made for a less political message than if French had been mentioned, as in the latter case the statement would have immediately been understood as favouring one language-camp over another. The idea that English is somehow more "neutral" or less "threatening" to Arabic is explored in chapter 4, but this section examines the appropriation of discourses of English as the language of knowledge. This discourses are reproduced through two interwoven strands: the idea that English is the ideal medium of instruction and that it is the main repository of innovation. Reading English would thus enable users to somehow access more knowledge and better knowledge, but also show themselves as better workers than their colleagues.

English as new, foreign and international (cf. chapter 4) also translates as the gateway to being "up-to-date" by connecting to transnational flows of knowledge, widening not only one's personal and professional connections but also one's research horizons. For instance, when I went to Ouargla to visit their career and language centre as well as the American Corner, I was introduced to Mohammed, who had been working in middle management at the university for many years. He explained that he wanted to speak to me as he relished opportunities to practice his English, and agreed to be interviewed about his experience of learning and using the language in his personal and professional life, and his views on the situation within the university has changed over the years. Although he had many different characteristics from most of my participants (he was an older but mostly self-taught learner who had chosen to develop his language skills out of choice rather than due to pressures from his employer), his responses relayed common themes. In this extract, he relates how the internet immediately indexes "English", which is one of the reason he chose to learn the language:

> CJ: You were saying the internet was changing things…how, why is the internet changing things with English?
>
> M: Because the internet give us another country. And because people always chase new. And I think the better way to find the information is the internet. Sometimes just we type in Father Google. Sometimes it's not good. But in Arabic it's obligatory, we don't have chance to learn. If internet you must take for you must use the internet.
>
> CJ: Ok…That's not in Arabic, it's more in English?
>
> M: I think this is why the people learning English, because the internet you can find good information I think with English it's better. And from time we try to make predictions for anything, it's in English, I think it's better in English than French because it makes progress against globalisation. (interview 15/03/17)

Learning English, in Mohamed's words, becomes about 'good information' and 'predictions', more than any other language due to its prominent place in the globalisation of knowledge and communi-

cation. Discourses about learning methods (online) and English as foreign (from the outside), new and global are interwoven in the construction of English as the language of knowledge 'making progress' against French due to globalisation.

Learning English is equated by English-speaking participants as being able to access 'better' information, more of it or more quickly. In the following extract, Djallil expands on Mohammed's point by providing specific examples of how he associates English with having 'an edge' and being ahead of the competition:

> CJ: So, to go back to your experience, you stopped teaching and now you're working in marketing. In a normal day or a normal week, where do you see English in your daily life?
>
> D: English in my daily life? Well… I encourage learning every day. And I think that…it has given me a serious edge, in terms of competencies and the ability to innovate and to find relevant information and you know, to go into the world to get, to be up to date with what's happening in the world. I mean for someone who's doing research in French for example, it'd be really difficult. If you take marketing for example, the content you can find in English, the books, the videos, the seminars, the trainings…are very different from what you'll find in French. There's much less interesting content. Maybe interesting is not the word for it. Much less…on a different level. Top level, would be in English.
>
> CJ: Yeah, so is it just that there's more of it in English or…?
>
> D: I think the top thinkers are in the States, in the States specifically, for start-ups, for innovation, for management methods…for example one work system that we use is Agile, it's been invented in the States, and it took five years to get into Europe, and in French. Because of the English. There is the issue of translating all the content in order to apply it. Before you can apply a system you need to understand it. If you don't understand the language, you cannot figure it out. So… yeah, everything that's happening, now I think, from my perspective, in the world of innovation, happens in English-speaking countries. Then gets transmitted, in English, to the rest of the world, or translated with a delay of a few years…
>
> CJ: So do you think it's a common experience for your colleagues and other people who work in…
>
> D: Yeah absolutely, absolutely. I mean, what I told you about having an edge with the English language, in contrast with colleagues, whenever I propose something for them to learn, I propose something in English and they tell me I don't read enough for it, when I tell them to read this book for example, so yeah… You're always one step behind if you don't speak the language well. (interview 05/09/17)

English confers prestige through its association with innovation and research, and therefore becomes a useful resource to increase one's cultural capital. If, as Bourdieu and Wacquant noted, cultural capital should instead be termed 'informational capital' (1992: 19), then developing linguistic competence is a key strategy to accumulate symbolic capital which can later be converted into both higher social status

and additional sources of income. Not speaking English meant that the latest management trends took 'five years to get into Europe' and his colleagues who could not read English were 'always one step behind'. English is characterised as the most common and appropriate medium for accessing 'global' and 'innovative' knowledge, but also transforms into a sign of prestige by giving users an advantage over their non-English speaking colleagues.

Discourses of English as the language of knowledge are particularly prevalent in and around universities, with some students, especially in scientific subjects, demanding that their entire course be switched to English. Bottom-up pressures to establish English as the medium of instruction rest on the frequently-voiced assumption that 'all research is in English'[16]. Students wanted a change of the medium of instruction because English is 'more useful' (interview with Tahar, 13/12/17) whereas 'French has expired' (conversation with Salma, 17/09/17), it is 'a dying language' (fieldnotes 05/12/17) or 'une langue pauvre'[17] (fieldnotes 11/10/17). The comparison with French was almost systematic (cf section 4.2), and Arabic was never mentioned as a potential medium of instruction.

Participants hoped that English would be a better better medium of instruction because of its perceived status as gatekeeper of international knowledge. In one interview, Hicheme detailed how his fellow students came to associate the language with knowledge, research and innovation:

> The most important things are in English. The most important papers are in English, because French is only for France but for English you get research from universities in the US, the UK, Canada… And I watch a lot of YouTube videos from youtubers who talk about microbiology, biochemistry, pharmacology… And that's only in English. Many students are watching it and trying to understand and so they start wanting to learn English. (interview 13/12/16)

Without English there was no access to 'the most important things', in terms of academic publications, but also in terms of other ways of learning and sharing information such as YouTube channels dedicated to pop science. In this particular case, Hicheme was in a privileged position of having access to these resources before others, thanks to his language skills. His fellow students hoped that if they were taught in English, they could read and watch these 'most important things' as well, without having to learn the language outside of their degree.

Discourses of English as the language of knowledge are also reproduced through top-down processes. The push for English as an academic language in Algeria was felt throughout the country, with postgraduates remarking that they now needed English for their PhD, and sometimes commenting that STEM students were pushed to complete their thesis in English 'even though there was no English outside the university'[18]. Publishing in English has become an indirect requirement for the completion of doctoral studies or obtaining an academic promotion, as publications in top impact journals (almost all in English) is now compulsory (fieldnotes 19/09/17, 25/09/17, amongst others). PhD

[16]This particular phrasing is from a biology student from Tlemcen but equivalent sentences were uttered several times in each site

[17]a poor or impoverished language

[18]This particular quote is from a student from Ouargla, but this sentiment was expressed in all field sites.

students must demonstrate English speaking and writing skills as well as have published in at least one international peer-reviewed journal (the vast majority of which are in English) over the course of their doctorate in order to be allowed to submit their thesis (see for instance the Carnet du Doctorant). One unit at a university hospital in the West of Algeria provided all their staff with English lessons in order for them to be able to read the latest publications (fieldnotes 08/03/17) and around a quarter of adult learners of English I met in language schools were in the medical field and felt pressured to be able to read publications in that language. Who was exerting the pressures ranged from direct orders from their hierarchy to a general impression that English speakers had more chances of promotion or presenting abroad.

The combination of hopes around English as the key to increased opportunities and as both sign and result of increased cultural capital was also occasionally expressed by non-English speakers, as in the case of Zohra. An Architecture lecturer who has worked in major universities in both the East and West, she expressed her regrets that she did not speak better English because:

> ça aurait été mieux pour ma carrière, il y a plus d'argent et plus de reconnaissance si vous publiez en anglais, peut-être parce que c'est plus répandu. Même si j'avais des bonnes notes à l'école et j'étais très bonne en grammaire, j'ai tout oublié et maintenant je ne comprends plus rien, je ne pourrais pas écrire un article.[19] (conversation 07/12/17)

Zohra highlights the notion that English is commonsensically linked to higher pay and more opportunities, even if the realities of the Algerian academic landscape mean that French and Arabic remain the key languages to this day. She also provides yet more examples of how linguistic competence is equated to 'des bonnes notes à l'ecole' and being 'bonne en grammaire', hinting at the possibility of a direct trajectory between school-level study of the language and 'écrire un article'. Zohra's experience is but one example of how the proliferation of policies increasing the role of English as academic gatekeeper in Algeria also feeds into wider discourses of English as inherently improving status and income ('plus d'argent et plus de reconnaissance'), whether or not this was true in practice.

Associating English with knowledge and science in a context where few Algerians use English allows for simultaneous discourses of widening possibilities and perpetuating exclusion. None of the participants discussed how realistic were expectations of being able to read scientific papers after only a few lessons, or of being taught in a foreign language in which even fewer students were proficient compared to French. The students who demanded a change of medium of instruction were all already confident in English, and complained about their fellow students who 'had not yet realised' that English would be better. Discourses of English as key to access to knowledge are appropriated as myths and hopes, woven into critiques of the current education system and students' lack of opportunities despite their perceived superiority of skills. Discourses of employability and mobility are reproduced through the idea that English is the language of knowledge and science, and therefore confers the user more cultural capital, either directly or as mediator of access to the latest trends and research. In Bourdieu's

[19] It would have been better for my career, there is more money and more recognition if you publish in English, maybe because it's more widespread. Even if I used to have good grades at school and I was very good at grammar, I forgot everything and now I don't understand anything anymore, I wouldn't be able to write an article.

terms (Bourdieu, 1986), English comes to equate embodied (norms and appreciation, "being aware" and knowing how to participate in these spaces), objectified (the ability of "use" social media, English-language spaces and programmes) and institutionalised (diplomas) cultural capital.

5.3.4 Developing the self

Cultural capital is also gained through cultivating new sets of skills and competences, some linked to the world of work (soft skills) but others mostly focused on the self. Whether through the concept of soft skills, with self-help books or "getting an edge", developing the self encompasses many of the discourses mentioned in previous sections, all connected through narratives of the worth of the individual. English facilitates new conceptions of a global and integrated citizenship, bringing together narratives of new connections, gateway to knowledge, self-improvement and support from external funders. When I met him at the American Centre in Algiers to discuss his experience with English, Wassim explicitly made this link, acknowledging the 'cultural capital' that comes from 'finding it before the bac', as individuals interesting in English will be good students who are interested in improving themselves (interview 04/06/17). Unsurprisingly, very few participants explicitly referred to cultural capital, but frequent allusions were made to the potential for upward mobility through a new sense of identity afforded by the language. As Seargeant notes in the case of Japan, a key part of the motivation to learn English is its central narrative 'as a catalyst for empowerment and individual self-realisation' (2009, p. 116).

Building on discourses of connections, knowledge and innovation, English represents one of the ways to rethink the link between the self and society. For Ayoub, student clubs organised through English are not just about practising but 'we try to be productive members of Algerian society' (interview 05/12/17), for instance through an initiative called "Green Hand" which saw English students clean the university, or AIESEC's summer schools for disadvantaged children. Algerian Black Pearl is an online radio created by students who met through their local English club and the ACCA to encourage discussions of difficult subjects such as domestic abuse and mental health, which they thought could be more easily broached through English (fieldnotes 11/09/17, 25/09/17, 28/09/17). The idea of English as the language which facilitates and inspires this "civic engagement" is shaped by discourses of English as 'a language for me'[20], whereas learning French would be doing like everyone else (fieldnotes 24/10/16, 13/12/16, 05/11/17, 04-06/12/17). It also feeds into processes of 'dépolitisation de la scène politique'[21] (Rahal & Matarese, 2016, p. 61), with protest movements up to the end of 2018[22] foregrounding localised demands and civil society organisations increasingly focused on environmental issues (Rahal & Matarese, 2016, pp. 61–65). Discourses around English magnify the centrality of the individual and the prestige attached to being different, ahead of the competition, more innovative or more connected, outside of the traditional political fault lines indexed by French.

[20] This particular wording is from Inès, a languages teacher in Tlemcen.

[21] depolitisation of the political sphere

[22] see section 3.2 about the 2019 protests

English users emphasise the idea that speaking and reading in English allows them to be aware of different modes of being, including in the world of work. For example, Salma, recruiter, blogger and career counsellor depicted the traditional vision of jobs as solely about money-making, with parents and friends heavily involved in career decisions and prioritising stability, holidays and income. But through self-development books and TEDx talks available online, she became aware that she wanted to change this attitude and encourage career decisions to be about the person, and following one's passion (conversation 17/09/17). Djallil recounted a similar story of wanting to use English to help his fellow students to know more about themselves and make better career choices:

> from my experience in university, as I told you, most students don't know what they'll do after they graduate. So that's something I wanted to discuss, or to work on. Like… for example, one campaign I wanted to do was kind of like skills fairs. Where everyone would teach on a different topic, and also I would invite professionals to speak about their experiences, and how… what happened to them in this space, which is university, and what did you do after that.. so "what's your reflection now that you are a professional on your lack of choice when you were a student". And so then we transmit, this… "having a clue" to the students, so they know what they need after the diploma, or they know they need to work on something. (interview 05/09/17)

English is equated to 'having a clue', both personally and professionally, thanks to a combination of reflexion from fellow Algerians and inspiration gleaned from international platforms and publications.

Themes of "finding your passion" and "following your dreams" recur throughout conversations, and these phrases are even often used in English in interactions conducted mostly in French and derja. In-real-life communication echoes the most prevalent use of English online, in the sense of being both the most visible to the casual observer and the most referred to by participants (including non-English users). Memes and inspirational stock phrases are shared, liked and commented on Facebook, as in the example in Figure 5.1. These examples came from four students, from different disciplines and different universities across Algeria, and were posted either on their wall or in a group for other students to see. Posters and commenters were both male and female, and although I tended to see more women posting "inspirational" phrases matched with a picture, a more systematic and large-scale study of gender posting would need to be conducted to draw conclusions. What these particular screenshots exemplify is the prevalence of short quotes or sentences on themes such as leadership, love, hope, happiness. Only in the last example were there responses to the quote, minimal as well, but often in the same mood of general rather than personal statements. English is key to a type of performance, as a way of saying things which would might be banal if they were expressed in languages more commonly found on their friends' wall, but here serve to demarcate the users as "different", more reflexive and philosophical.

Using English as a marker of a heightened and improved sense of self could also be observed in English-speaking spaces. Ice-breaker-style activities (whether organised by foreign or local employees and volunteers) in the American Cultural Centre or World Learning regularly included questions about one's favourite books. Choosing a "favourite" to present to the group is inherently performative, and

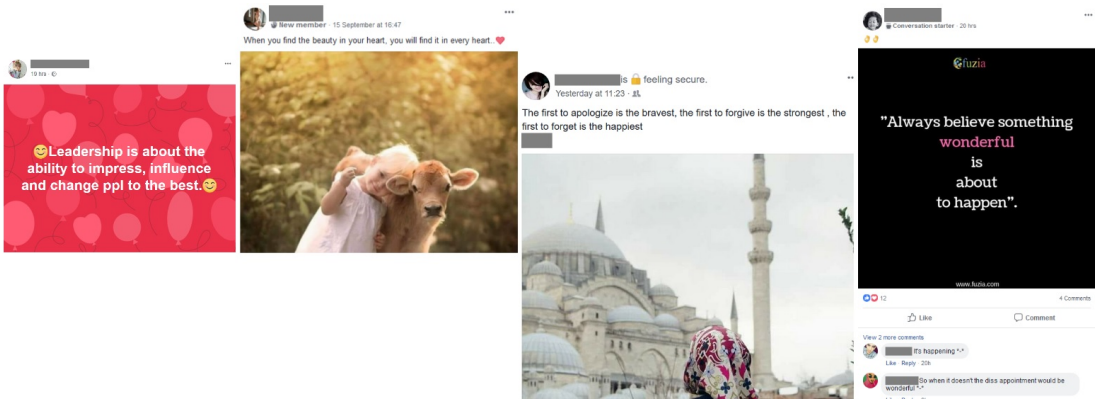

Figure 5.1: Facebook posts from students (September 2017)

the near-systematic choice of self-help or "inspirational literature", such as Coelho's *The Alchemist* or Rhonda Byrne's *The Secret*, hints at the symbolic capital embodied by this genre. Using English was also used by (mostly young, educated) English speakers to connect self-development with societal change, whether through participation in the groups and programmes mentioned above, or in reproducing quotes about "self-empowerment". For example, during a TEDx event near Algiers, quotes on post-it notes regarding women and empowerment were found in the women's toilets in place of mirrors (see Figure 5.2). The comments included "Hey, Look up! You're beautiful", "I love the person I've become, because I fought to become her", "There is no force More powerful than a Woman Determined to rise" and "some Women fear the fire, some Women simply become it". All are in the same handwriting, apart from the one which reads "Don't let your dreams, just be dreams" (yellow, top right).

Personal soft skills and attributes hinted at in the Facebook quotes and self-help titles (leadership, a capacity for happiness and love, etc.) are seen as being developed through English. Feryel credits her learning of the language with making her outspoken and confident, whereas Djallil argues that his discovery of skydiving was thanks to his exposure to the English language, which gave him 'fearlessness and can-do attitude!' (interviews 15/03/17 and 05/09/17). In both instances, structural factors such as economic and social capital were erased, referring only to English's transformative power. While this discourse is mostly re-purposed by young people, some aspects are also reproduced by other learners, as in the example below from Mohammed, a senior administrator from Ouargla:

> CJ: So in a way English is a way to self-development and travelling? Is that what you're saying?
>
> M: Yeah, yeah. Especially in the travelling give me many people when I study English I try to learn all the little which used in the trips for example you ask in the hotel single room, double room… For example how much the room… So work better than another language. Ok in the career centre at the university I try to for example use new words for example with the student teachers that's in the university. After that for example when I visit some companies for the bridge I find that I learn from them… because today it's the weather is not good today and don't forget that you are in spring. (…)
>
> CJ: It's really interesting what you said about needing English for…

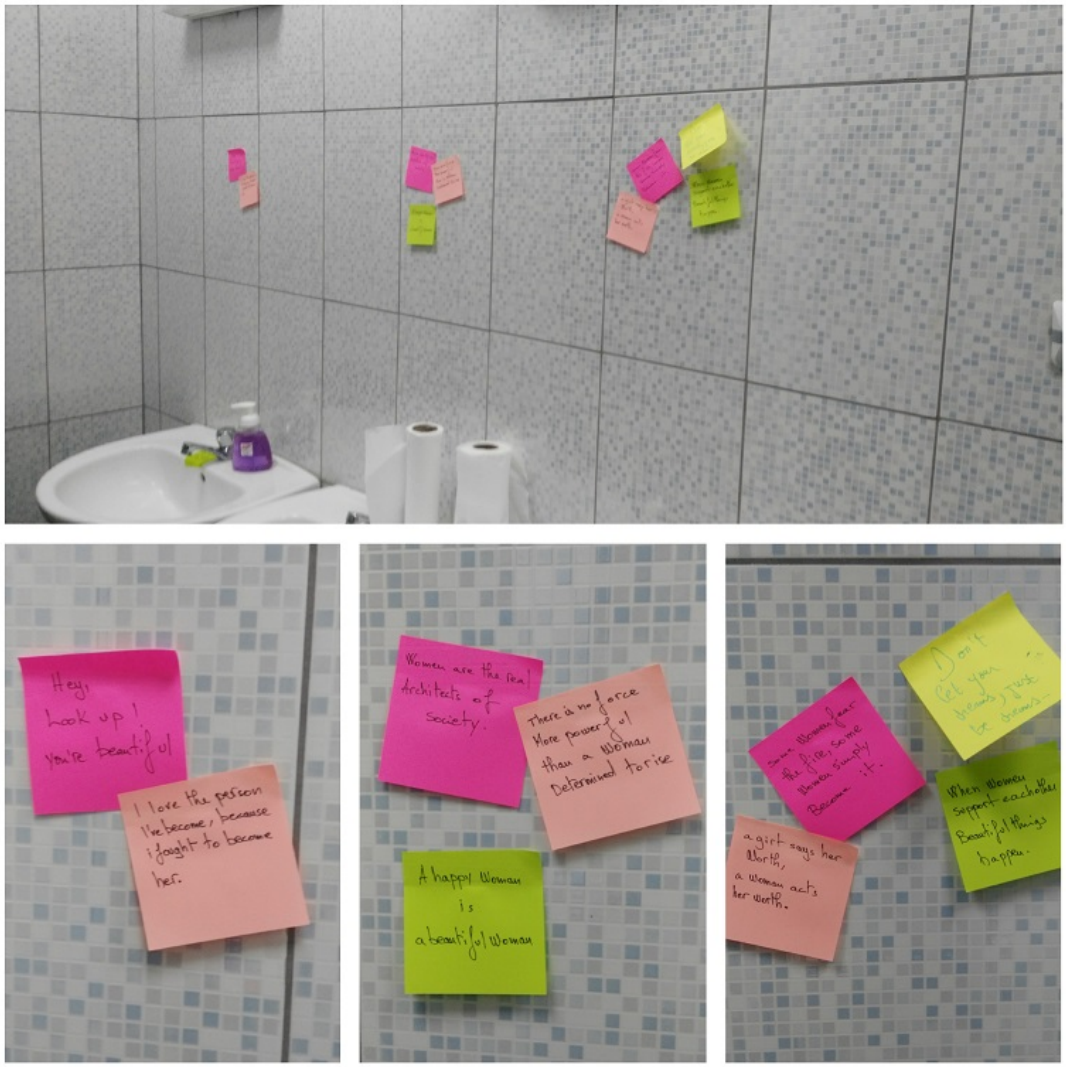

Figure 5.2: Post-it notes found at a TEDx event near Algiers (February 2017)

> M: And sometimes when I meet someone who speak English it's better for me if I find academic English. Because when you study English you can develop and I can for example [indistinct] But now with my job and my work I don't have time. I am 45 and I have 4 children. But if I find for example this word I study English. (interview 15/03/17)

Although not always linked to specific examples, the idea that by definition English enables you to 'learn from them' and that with it 'you can develop' enables the user to claim higher economic and cultural capital (they will need it when they travel) as well as social (they work with people all over the world), while also presenting these forms of capital as something they have worked towards themselves rather than inherited. The transformation can be not only internal, with the acquisition of new skills and attributes, but also external, with other people seeing the speaker as inherently being endowed with those skills by the fact of using the language. Many participants, especially languages teachers, mentioned that teenagers thought of English as "cool" and peppered their speech with English words or phrases to impress their friends (interviews with Tarik, 08/07/17, and Lounès, 14/03/17, amongst others). If speaking or knowing English is perceived as "cool", it is partly because it indexes wider symbolic capital. The fact that these attributes, skills and resources are both desirable and mediated through English is evident in comments such as Sarah and Inès's: 'I can't marry with somebody who can't speak English' (fieldnotes 06/12/17). For these young teachers, English was a shorthand to signify the education, mindset, job prospects and life experience they were looking for.

However, telling participants that my research was about English, and my own positionality as half-French and half-British, have tended to produce answers foregrounding exclusively English and French, only occasionally highlighting the interactions of discourses and practices surrounding these languages with others. In the following extract, Feryel expands on the idea that learning English made her more self-confident, relating her personal development with her increased employability, before using her learning of Spanish as an example of her aspirational mindset:

> F: Donc je vous ai parlé de mon expérience dans différents.. et je vois qu'à chaque fois que je vais à l'entretien, je peux l'avoir! Pourquoi? Parce que j'ai l'anglais. Et maintenant je fais l'espagnol.
>
> CJ: Juste pour le travail, ou par intérêt?
>
> F: C'est un bénéfice. Parce que les langues étrangères je vois que…c'est les langues étrangères qui dominent le monde. Pour le travail, parce que là je suis avec [une organisation internationale], et c'est tout le monde qui parle français, parle l'anglais, parle l'arabe, et on a aussi ceux, par exemple aux Etats-Unis, ils parlent l'espagnol. Donc ça m'a encouragée, ça m'a vraiment motivée à apprendre l'espagnol. J'ai un collègue qui travaille aux Etats-Unis, il parle, il est diplômé en espagnol. Quand j'entends qu'il parle en espagnol…ooooh I have to! I have to! Donc j'ai fait des efforts, j'en ai fait l'année passée, et maintenant ça va très bien.[23] (interview 15/03/17)

[23] F: So I told you about my experience in different… and I see that each time I go to the interview, I can have it! Why? Because I have English. And now I do Spanish.

CJ: Just for work, or because you're interested?

F: It's a benefit. Because foreign languages I can see that… It's foreign languages which dominate the world. For work, because

As mentioned in subsection 5.2.2, this attitude seems widespread, with many young learners of English, who connect English with innovation and self-development, also learning other languages. For instance, Islem, an engineering student in Ouargla, wanted to speak to me in German, as he said he already knew French, Arabic and English, had spent the previous year learning German and was now starting Russian (fieldnotes 14/03/17). Similarly, Baya, Hasna and Malak were respectively learning German, Turkish and Korean (fieldnotes 14/01/17). Although their initial interest was spurred on by different triggers (an inspiring teacher, soap operas, and interest for a different culture), and all three of them were currently training to become English teachers, they all felt that widening their linguistic repertoire would help them better themselves as individuals. Therefore, developing the self is not just about English, but English becomes a key way to index prestige and status. With linguistic aspirations 'dialectically constituted in the relationship between the macro-domains of public discourses and the micro-domains of individual experience' (Piller & Takahashi, 2006, p. 59), discourses surrounding the language have the strongest links to global discourses of personal development and self-realisation (see for instance Park and Wee, 2012; Piller and Takahashi, 2006; Seargeant, 2009). English becomes associated with bettering yourself and your position in society, through increased economic, social and cultural capital. Goals and aspirations are not linguistic competence per se, but rather 'the pursuit of the language becomes a means of expressing one's identity and of negotiating aspects of one's native culture' (Seargeant, 2009, p. 131). Discourses and practices are interwoven, with self-help books and videos used as means to learn and practise, reinforcing discourses of English as the language of personal development, enabling and showcasing status and upward mobility.

In conclusion, Feryel's previously quoted response about her goals is useful in showing how discourses of English as the international language, the language of knowledge, the language of employability and the language of self-development bolster each other:

> CJ: Et ce serait quoi votre but personnel avec l'anglais… comme objectif, ou comme espoir?
>
> F: Je dirais par l'anglais je peux accéder à plusieurs chemins. Sincèrement! Parce que l'anglais elle m'a facilité… même à avoir une personnalité. C'est-à-dire je deviens pas timide, c'est tout le monde qui est [mime audience in thrall] [rires]. Voilà donc c'est ça mon but c'est… Parce que y a une autre raison… et moi, comme je suis leader, ça m'intéresse. J'aime les voyages… donc avec les autres langues, je pense que ça existe, mais l'anglais, leadership programme, plusieurs programmes. Donc je me suis dit, voilà, je dois améliorer mon niveau pour pouvoir faire des aventures. C'est pour échanger, c'est pour aller à USA… pour comment dirais-je, pour aider, in order to share my experience with you! To share my experience in volunteering, in leadership… Je pense que l'anglais c'est le [centre?] qui nous relie avec le monde entier. C'est exchange programmes… c'est

at the moment I'm with [an international organisation], and it's everyone who speaks French, speak English, speak Arabic, and we have those who, for instance in the US, they speak Spanish. So it encouraged me, it really motivated me to learn Spanish. I have a colleague who works in the US, he speaks, he has a diploma in Spanish. When I hear that he speaks Spanish… *ooooh I have to! I have to!* So I made an effort, I made an effort last year, and now it's going really well.

> parce qu'on a beaucoup d'opportunités d'aller à l'étranger… Une langue c'est un programme…des événements. Donc j'ai participé. Toujours l'anglais.[24] (interview 15/03/17).

Developing one's self and 'personalité' opens more opportunities because of heightened awareness of what is possible, through 'new' connections and 'des aventures', which in turn reinforce connections and opportunities. The concept of personnalité in the Algerian context signifies both personal traits (as in the English meaning) but also an "authentic" social identity, as in "la personnalité algérienne" (cf. subsection 1.4.1). Narratives of nurturing your personality echo and reinforce wider discourses around English as "neutral", connecting the personal and the national dimensions of language learning.

5.4 Immobility

5.4.1 Elite closure

Language policies by nature are highly restrictive, conferring privileged status to some practices above others, and thereby 'designat[ing] the mobile' (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 152). If we take into account the entirety of glottopolitique rather than simply governmental policy, then understanding the interaction between discourses and practices is even more crucial in understanding whether mechanisms of elite closure are reproduced or challenged. Defined by Carol Myers-Scotton (1993, p. 149) as 'a type of mobilisation strategy by which those persons in power establish or maintain their powers and privileges via linguistic choices', elite closure is an inevitable by-product of inequality and language variation, but the use of a former colonial language as an administrative language amplifies the potency of this strategy. Existing economic, social and cultural forms of capital are bolstered through restricted access to an education system developing the language skills necessary to take part in the highest economic and political spheres. In the case of a protoelite forming, the desire to build an alternative system of symbolic capital will often be indexed linguistically (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 154).

In the case of Algeria, discourses and practices analysed above point to the symbolic use of English as the new "language of mobility" which would lead to new and more horizontal hierarchies of power. Nonetheless, the prevalence of narratives of the positive transformative effects of English should not obscure the ways in which they are integrated and reproduced within the existing socio-economic stratification, relying heavily on (rather than overhauling) current forms of symbolic capital.

[24] CJ: And what would be your personal goal with English… as an objective, or hope?

F: I would say that through English I can access several paths. Sincerely! Because English it helped me… even to have a personality. I mean I stop being shy, everyone is [mine audience in thrall] [laughs]. So then that is my goal it's… Because there's another reason… and me, because I'm *leader*, it interests me. I like travelling… so with the other languages, I think it exists, but with English, *leadership programme*, several programmes. So I told myself, here you go, I must improve my level in order to be able to go on adventures. It's to exchange, to go to *USA*… To, how would I say, to help, *in order to share my experience with you! To share my experience in volunteering, in leadership*… I think that English it's the [centre?] which links us to the entire world. It is *exchange programmes*… It's because we have many opportunities to go abroad… A language it's a programme… Events… So I took part. Always English.

Firstly, discourses of English as the language of mobility mask the inequality between different actors and types of migration, with spatial mobility not open to or even given status and recognition for all. Young working class males remain 'equated with social problems and violence' (Hecking, 2017, p. 184) and their aspirations discounted. Media coverage of the harraga[25] oscillates between portraying them as victims of a 'system' which ignores them, and 'suicidés' who refuse the hard work necessary to help build the nation (Chena, 2016, pp. 55–78). For Palladino (2018, p. 72), 'mobility is a privilege for some, but it entails forced, involuntary immobility for others', and attempts at transgressing the social norms of appropriate mobility are met with strong rebuffal. In a conversation with an emeritus professor, the contrast was drawn between his own experience of learning English through travelling 'for work, pleasure, love and all reasons' and younger people's inadequate language skills. The comparison was marked with a sneering tone towards 'those non-university educated young people who learn by doing trabendo' because their suppliers and markets have shifted from mostly France to Turkey and the whole of Europe 'and so they need to speak English' (fieldnotes 25/09/17). While this professor particularly highlighted the contrast between his own language practices while mobile (legitimate and to be lauded) and those of less privileged others (to be dismissed), many participants's comments on their own mobilities included judgements on others' perceived inadequate choices. These derogatory comments were rarely made during interviews but rather were expressed in passing in informal conversations. They replicate existing economic and social power structures, as mobilities in the 1970s and 1980s were state-sponsored and much easier in terms of necessary paperwork, with fewer visa required. While these earlier mobilities are described as prestigious, linked as they are to current high-status positions such as university professors and medical consultants, contemporary mobilities are repeatedly brushed off as illegal, petty or damaging to individuals and the country.

Teachers in language schools were especially prompt in drawing up distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate desires for mobility, with wanting to learn English to take part in short-term training or prestigious internships abroad applauded, but simply "wanting to leave" was frowned upon as unpatriotic and shallow (fieldnotes 1-2/03/17, 4-6/05/17, 10-12/12/17). Here constructions of national identity and patriotic pride mediate discourses of mobility through English, with not all participants able to claim their desires and dreams in the same way. For instance, when discussing their favourite location or their dreams for the future with me in class, trainee teachers tended to pause after mentioning a foreign destination to quickly confirm 'but I love my country', or were interrupted by their classmates who proclaimed their patriotic feelings. The presence of the researcher served to bring to the fore the performance of interest for certain destinations (in my case, the UK, in my American colleague's case, the US) as well as enactment of national pride. However, discussions with undergraduate students at an elite university in the capital indicated a different dynamic. Unlike at the ENS where trainee teachers were contractually obliged to teach for a certain number of years, students there expected each other to go abroad, and proudly described their previous travels and proclaimed their plans to continue their studies in Europe (fieldnotes 18/02/17). Even though the educated who

[25]In Arabic حراقة, those who burn. Young (mostly) men who "burn" their papers (literally) or the borders (figuratively) in order to cross the Mediterranean.

leave to access training or a job abroad are unlikely to come back to "share their skills" with Algeria, no stigma was attached to "just leaving" in the way that young people in other situations felt they had to justify themselves. Privileged students' already higher symbolic capital made mobility an expected part of their lives.

As mentioned in subsection 4.3.2, while English seemingly allows for a simultaneous movement backwards to a more "authentic" past and forwards to a "liberated" future, in practice not everyone can gain equal access to these claims of a new identity. Young people are described as "tainted" by globalisation and detached from their authentic indidividual and collective identity, mostly due to the failings of the public education system. During my fieldwork, new technologies and new generations were common topics of discussions sessions in university and in English-language spaces such as the American Cultural Centre (fieldnotes 15/11/16, 31/01/17, 09/07/17, amongst others). Globalisation (and its associated language, English) is perceived as a destabilising threat and complaining (including by young people) of the negative habits of the "new generation" due to smartphones was recurrent. With English so entangled with the aforementioned themes, such discourses are an important reminder that the benefits of accessing knowledge, connecting with others and transgressing boundaries are not equally open to all.

Access to mobility and increased symbolic capital through English is also mediated through its relocalisation within Algerian discourses of national identity and what an "authentic" Algerian personality entails. In Shulist's research on the Northwest Amazon (2016), she demonstrates how access to social capital was mediated by assessments of "authentic" identities, validated by a combination of language use, genealogy and ethnic membership claims. Competence in the indigenous language was not a binary yes/no criteria of membership, and participation in public life, recognition as a legitimate member of the group and access to certain spaces was granted along a 'graduated authenticity' plane instead: 'some individuals have to argue more than others for their right to contribute to conversations about Indigenous political concerns' (Shulist, 2016, p. 121). In the case of Algeria, despite being able to demonstrate similar linguistic competences in English, young people who did not come from privileged backgrounds had to discursively "prove" their belonging and authentic attachment to the country as a prelude to talking about mobility. If, as Silverstein suggests (2003, p. 532), 'there are differential claims to social participation based on differences of membership in what we can term a language community', social and cultural capital also determines who is deemed fit to belong within a particular language community and enjoy its benefits. Despite claims of being open to all, English offered graduated rewards based on existing cultural and social capital: the more connections, prestigious degree, knowledge and prior experience of international mobility, the more unproblematic one's claims to "wanting to leave" were deemed. Conversely, hints of wanting to improve one's life through moving abroad (whether temporarily or not) were derided and deplored, and the speaker labelled a bad citizen. The idea of a community of "English speakers" who would all equally access social and geographical mobility is therefore elusive.

Despite the general discourses of English as enhancing employability, practices point to furthering

employment for the already privileged. Scientific disciplines are the most in demand, and therefore recruit from the highest baccalaureate grades. They also benefit from lower unemployment rates upon graduation and higher salaries. With the entire courses taught in French whereas secondary schooling takes place in Arabic, scientific disciplines suffer from high drop-out rates and only retain the more motivated or linguistically privileged (for instance because they grew up in a family where French was a part of the linguistic environment) (Haddab, 2014), which further reinforces the symbolic capital gained by graduates of these disciplines. For Ayoub, a postgraduate student in English at a Western university and active even organiser, the correlation was evident: 'because you only need 10 to get into Arabic, so students are no really motivated and not interested because they know there will be no jobs afterwards' (interview 05/12/17). In Ouargla, the contrast was even more marked between the STEM and humanities campuses. For instance, Feryel points to divergent English-language skills, which she also ascribes to lack of motivation:

> CJ: Et donc y a pas de différences entre hydrocarbures, géologie…
>
> F: Non. Mais y en a dans des spécialités comme sociologie, lettres, qui font des études en arabe. Donc ces spécialités on trouve un peu des gens qui sont pas bien doués en langue anglaise. Parce que souvent ils parlent en arabe, ils font des exposés, la participation et tout c'est en arabe.
>
> CJ: Y a moins de motivation pour l'anglais….ou il y a plus de différences…?
>
> F: Non, la motivation est un petit peu… C'est-à-dire sociologie, psychologie, lettres, économie, droit… [long pause and subsequent switch to a different topic][26] (interview 15/03/17)

In a subsequent conversation, she admitted that the main differences were not simply skills but also interest, with students on the STEM campus requesting that the workshops be conducted in English "to practise" and more enthusiastic about completing personal development courses (partly delivered in English). The idea of differences between the already-prestigious sciences and the humanities in terms of interest towards English, self-motivation and participation was a recurrent feature in interviews with students, teachers and professionals who worked with graduates (interviews with Meriem, 23/02/17, and Wassim, 04/06/17; fieldnotes 15/12/16).

While the received wisdom is that it is the "Arabophones" who are pushing for English, students from French-language disciplines exhibited higher communicative competences in English and were more involved in initiatives in or through that language throughout my observations and interviews. Salma, who also works as a career coach and blogger, confided that she received many questions from language graduates who could not find how to turn their qualifications into a career (interview 18/09/17). Naïma, who delivered ESP lessons to a cohort of students on a new university-level apprentice scheme, emphasised that their lack of motivation was because they knew that they foremostly

[26] CJ: And so there's no difference between hydrocarbons, geology…

F: No. But there are in disciplines like sociology, literature, who study in Arabic. So in these disciplines we find a few people who aren't very good in English. Because often they speak in Arabic, they do presentations, participation in class and it's all in Arabic.

CJ: There's less motivation for English… or there are more differences?

F: No, motivation is a bit… I mean sociology, psychology, literature, economy, law…

needed experience, French and technical knowledge, and therefore often complained at having to learn 'yet another language' without being given a choice (conversation after a lesson observation, fieldnotes 11/12/17). Similarly in the South-East, Farid, career counsellor coordinator, explained that they delivered all their training in Arabic despite receiving funding from an American organisation, and even though he considered his own personal drive and successes as coming from the opportunities opened by using English. As university degrees are almost entirely theoretical, he believed that the most pressing issue for the students and recent alumni was to develop personal skills such as leadership, practical skills like CV writing or industry-specific skills such as book-keeping or familiarity with specific softwares, in order for them to be hired (fieldnotes 18/09/17). Despite the prevalence of discourses systematically presenting English as the choice of Arabic-speakers against and instead of French, dynamics of language practices show a more complex pattern of educational privilege leading to a linguistic repertoire widened to include English, as already indicated in subsections 3.5.1 and 3.5.2.

English also represents an elite closure strategy by facilitating employment for the already privileged without extending the advantages to the rest of the population. Despite impressions of English as a 'tru[ly] incommensurable' form of capital (Park & Wee, 2012, p. 143), it is convertible into economic capital only in addition to existing cultural and social capital. Graduates from the scientific disciplines enjoy higher employment rates, further reinforced by the higher entrance requirements, making these streams more prestigious and thereby making competition even fiercer. With pilot programmes often run with scientific subjects because they are considered easier to place, or more resources poured in by external donors (fieldnotes 18-19/10/16, 13-15/03/17, 17-18/09/17), differences in interest are accentuated into increased opportunities for exposure and activities for some disciplines and not others. Elite institutions of the humanities, such as the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, Sciences Po, Polytechnique or the Haute Ecole de Commerce, with their courses taught in French, are an exception. Their campuses have seen a proliferation of clubs and events promoting employability, knowledge and self-development through French and English (fieldnotes 18/02/17, interview with Aymen 04/11/15; see also Figures 5.3 and 5.4). English is not the preserve of the Arabic-speakers, but instead is used on its own or together with French in other to promote social participation and skills training. Despite the discourses, in practice English is not being used as an antidote to the diplomé chômeur[27], but rather provides additional opportunities for already-privileged science graduates.

Furthermore, language ideologies surrounding "mastery" and correctness mean that socio-economic stratification is often reinforced rather than challenged by practices of English, by only recognising as legitimate certain learning pathways. Even though informal means of learning abound, whether through Facebook groups, YouTube courses or webinars, most recruiters still requires language certificates as part of the recruitment process. In addition, the emphasis on "standard" practices of English translate into the disqualification of other varieties. Autodidacts thus find themselves in the unenviable position of having to prove the legitimacy of their skills and of the label given to their practices. As mentioned in chapter 3, it is difficult to ascertain the relative proportion of self-learners compared

[27]Unemployed graduate. The links between discourses around language, schools and the notion of diplômé chômeur are further analysed in the case of Morocco in Boutieri 2016

Figure 5.3: Facebook page for a training event organised by a prestigious French-language higher education institution (February 2017)

Figure 5.4: Facebook page for an event organised by a business school in Algiers (March 2017)

Figure 5.5: A post from one of the Algerian English-speaking Facebook groups (October 2017)

to learners in language schools, and the groups overlap in their learning practices. Nonetheless, due to the high costs associated with lessons and the frequent suspicions as to their efficacy, many young people especially resort to online resources. As visible in Amina's surprise at parents who register all their children for English lessons, the economic capital required is high but justified by families in terms of 'an investment' (interview 23/02/17, cf. subsection 3.5.1). This restricts these practices to parents and students from an economically comfortably background and professionals whose employers cover their training costs. It also explains the attraction of free courses sanctioned by a certificates, such as those delivered by the US Embassy through the American Cultural Center. The valorisation of certain standards and certifications only validates the forms of learning and knowledge developed by the elite, while effectively closing access to others.

Teachers' insistence upon certain pronunciation and lexical items is subsequently reproduced by many students, who uphold norms of "correctness" as related to the standards they have learnt. In group conversations, students in English-speaking spaces occasionally "corrected" each other, even when the message was clear, and in several instances mocked their peers online who pretended to use English but in fact spoke "no English". Figure 5.5 is an example of how discourses of mastery, correctness and exogenous norms disqualify some communicative practices as either "not English" or as "killing" English. The fact that the name and photograph of user is obscured shows that this post is not about shaming a particular individual but rather about demonstrating one's own superior "mastery" of English and the willingness to uphold these "standards", although the meaning from the original post is clear.

What also became apparent over the course of my fieldwork is the small number of people involved in the touted opportunities which English is meant to offer indiscriminately. The same groups and people are found in all English-language spaces, and the same people access mobility programmes and scholarships. Partly this is due to the limited number of these spaces, which therefore quickly

acquire notoriety in an environment clamouring for a "chance to practise". Below is an extract from my fieldnotes upon meeting Salma for the first time, showing how individuals spread across the entire country nonetheless moved in the same circles:

> She mentioned AIESEC and Imtiaz and the coworking space The Address. She reminded me that this is also where Omar went, and she went on an AIESEC exchange to the same country in the summer. There seems to be overlap between the different groups. (fieldnotes 17/09/17)

Salma, who lives and works in the South, immediately mentioned spaces in Algiers and her social circle overlapped with that of Omar, who grew up and currently worked in the South-East, but had studied in one of Algiers' top Engineering faculties. Similarly, Rim, a teacher in Algiers, remarked that:

> have you noticed? It's always the same people. Then they give the tips to their friends, who get the scholarship as well. (fieldnotes 07/10/17).

In my own observations, I regularly came across the same people in different spaces, and when meeting new people who spoke English outside these spaces, realised they knew many of the same spaces and individuals, having worked, studied or volunteered alongside them. The high costs involved in being able to benefit from these opportunities also restrict participation to Facebook groups rather than attendance at events. Although World Learning delivers programmes through local partners in eighteen locations across the country, and are committed to relaying talks via Facebook Live, many popular events are only available to those who can travel to Algiers. In one of my observations, one participant had travelled from Adrar to Algiers, 1,500km away, for a five day workshop. Resources in terms of finances, time and family support would all have been necessary in order to take part. Gender was not a directly visible variable of participation (there were many women in all spaces), but rather was mediated via economic and social capital: only women from wealthy and/or highly educated backgrounds could easily travel across great distances on their own or take part in international projects abroad. Economic and cultural capital acted as a gatekeeper to English-language spaces, which remained restricted to a small number of people.

The small numbers of "recognised" English speakers facilitate the reproduction of discourses of social distinction. Learning English is frequently described as limited to the "enlightened few" who have become aware of its importance. Both Houda and Hannah qualified people who are interested in English as 'rich and aware' and therefore 'know it's the language that's going to be dominant' (interviews on 04/11/15 and 06/09/17). The correlation between social class and interest for English was also found in a 2012 large-scale survey of attitudes towards English (Euromonitor International, 2012). To a certain extent, discourses of English as simultaneously highly prized and a marker of superior awareness is self-fulfilling, with "English" as a form of symbolic capital linked to the practices of the elites, and therefore desirable. Speaking English and socialising within one of the handful of English-language spaces thus becomes a way of demonstrating high cultural capital, as one who is "in the know", future-oriented and well-connected.

Discourses of English as the language of opportunities and mobility should therefore be under-

stood in conjunction with highly selective practices. Consequently, the usefulness of English in terms of transcending existing hierarchies is limited by its appropriation as a mechanism of elite closure, adding to rather than overhauling existing patterns involving French. "English" is not immediately a form of symbolic capital: mobilities are discounted, employability denied, and people's very linguistic capacities or collective/personal identities questioned unless individuals possess other forms of economic, cultural and social capital.

5.4.2 Blaming the system and constructing expertise

Beyond the reproduction of socio-economic hierarchies via exclusionary practices, the discourses themselves promote a static view of society, by focusing on external responsabilities for the linguistic situations and perpetuating representations of expertise as coming from the Global North.

Viewing glottopolitique as pertaining solely to the realm of language policy and language planning is reproduced through participants' responses, with frequent references to supposed political interferences from the French government as directly responsible for the relative absence of English (cf. section 4.2). In the West of the country, Abdennour, an administrator involved in international cooperation programmes qualified Algeria as a Francophone country 'not by need but by political decision' (interview 06/12/17). Science students and teachers who wanted the medium of instruction of their courses changed to English rather than French despaired of what they saw as governmental opposition to this possibility, but further research showed that there is no official language policy for higher education and that universities and individual educators are left to devise their own[28]. This means that in practice, lecturers could choose which language to teach and assess in, although it is unclear whether all teaching staff are equally aware of this. Discourses about English feed into the two wider and intersecting identity narratives described by Benkhaled and Vince (2017, p. 243) as 1) 'the authoritarian "system" (a nebulous fusion of state and regime) versus the downtrodden "people"' and 2) 'the perpetual identity crisis'. Defining language practices as solely the responsibility and result of governmental decisions (whether Algerian or foreign) contributes to the manichean dichotomy between "system" and "people" without presenting opportunities for change.

The state's perceived lack of support for English was also deemed responsible for teachers and learners' recurrent complaint over the inability to practise. Language school teachers across the country asked in Q&A sessions why the government was not doing more, and why cultural organisations such as the British Council were not putting more pressure on government to act in favour of one language over another (fieldnotes 01/05/16, 14/03/17, 14/10/17, amongst others). Governmental organisations, whether foreign or national, were given more agency over language practices than individuals. Contrary to Ounis's views that 'les Etats-Unis semblent exercer d'importantes pressions diplomatiques sur le gouvernement algérien pour l'obliger à choisir l'anglais comme première langue étrangère au lieu du français'[29] (Ounis, 2012, p. 88), English teachers in private language schools and at universities

[28] I would like to thank Yassine Guermoudi for bringing this to my attention.

[29] the United States appear to exert important diplomatic pressures on the Algerian government to force them to choose

seemed to invite increased financial, logistical and political involvement from Britain and the US, often as a means to counteract French influence. For Tarik, language teacher in Algiers, the UK (and by extension English) and Algeria are like chalk and cheese, and therefore even governmental interference does not present the same threat as in the case of France. English is seen as 'neutral' because there is 'no ideology' attached to the language, unlike French which is 'evil' (all terms are his, interview 07/06/17). Abdennour, who works at a university in the West of the country, made this link explicit by commenting that he would like to see more promotion of the English language by national institutions 'because we have no issue with British, and they would would be welcome in Algeria' (interview 05/12/17). When my answers included suggestions on integrating language production outside of lesson time, participants nearly always followed by another question or comment about language policy and planning. Comparisons with other countries where English was not prominent in the linguistic landscape were not considered relevant, and Algeria's especially long and brutal colonisation by France was regularly mentioned as a reason for Algerian exceptionalism in understanding the role(s) of English today. Despite the emphasis on self-help literature and personal mobility in one-to-one interviews, questions of practising English were not only about discussing teaching and learning practices, but also about the responsibility of forces greater than oneself in current perceived difficulties.

Native speakerism favours international organisations, whose local advertising and project funding further encourage the phenomenon. Cultural organisations have a vested interest in remaining seen as the arbitrator of correctness, and bilateral cooperation programmes are a key aspect of soft power for embassies. In Algeria, interviews with embassy and cultural organisations staff as well as participant observations in events organised by them underlined how the UK and the US competed to gain access to bilateral deals focused on "improving education", from teacher training to textbook writing and sending top students to undertake their graduate studies abroad. For instance, the British Council administers the training to secondary inspectors of English (who play the combined role of teacher trainer and Ofsted) and on an EU-funded employability programme, "experts" from English-speaking Canada were chosen to lead the workshops rather than "non-native" English-speakers from continental Europe (fieldnotes 05/12/17). The promotion of "native speakers" as automatic "experts" enables the UK and the US to manoeuvre themselves in a privileged position when bidding for contracts regarding English language teaching. Their foreign offices can claim language ownership as an asset even though other countries would have more experience in designing and delivering effective English as a Foreign Language teaching within the education system. This is not specific to Algeria, and international rankings' criteria for higher education (such as international publications, internationalisation, reputation) '[serve] to promote English in covert ways despite the fact that each criterion is ostensibly language-neutral' (Piller, 2016, p. 181). As English-medium instruction is sometimes seen as equivalent to improved quality, lucrative partnership contracts also favour "English native speakers" as education experts (Piller, 2016, pp. 179–185). Therefore debates around native speakers affect not only what counts as English but also who is an expert on the language, and by extension at teaching it.

English instead of French as the first foreign language

The construction of "expertise" as foreign further discounts local knowledge and practices. "Experts" who delivered training workshops and keynotes on education reforms, whether on assessment quality or ethics in higher education, regularly had no experience or knowledge of Algeria (fieldnotes 04/11/15, 19-20/10/16, 31/05-01/06/16, 17/09/17). One of the most vivid examples was one of the foreign speakers at the English Language Teaching conference who, upon being asked what teachers could do to motivate pupils for whom English was nowhere outside the classroom, replied 'they [the pupils] don't think that, English is everywhere!', despite having only arrived in Algeria the day before (fieldnotes 31/05-01/06/16). Native speakerism, combined with discourses of both English and expertise as foreign, entrenches dynamics of global inequality, and poses the question of how coloniality in knowledge production can be effectively challenged.

Discourses about English should therefore not be dissociated from the wider context of the politicisation of culture and the use of discussions of culture and language as a proxy for political debate, as well as their entrenchment in global inequalities. Discussions of language policy and language practices are often not about language at all, and discourses of English as the language of mobility and self-development should also be understood within wider discourses of immobility. If culture is 'the site of a struggle to assert the place within the new division of privilege of a particular group of actors' (McDougall, 2017a, p. 247), then relocalising all authority and responsibility for language practices to the state contributes to elite closure because it keeps stratification intact and change impossible. This chapter thus points ot the fact that discourses about English do not in fact disrupt the existing frames of understanding but contribute to maintaining the status quo.

5.5 Conclusion

Direct questioning regarding "why are you learning English?" generally yields generic and vague reponses such as 'because I need it for my life', 'we need English in our life' or 'I will use it for my future', with these phrases repeated as explanations for each other when pressed for more details. However, broader discussions and interviews were more fruitful in yielding information about how English users thought about their practices and motivations. Survey results often mimic wider discourses but observations and interviews allow for finer understanding of what people might mean and how some concepts are appropriated and reconstructed. The articulation of the individuals and the national, with differences between individual and group interviews but also references to other debates, is missing in surveys.

A key concept in participants' understanding of the place of English in contemporary Algeria for that of mobility, both spatial and social, with the language seen as a form of social capital enabling these mobilities. As Hannah, who works for the ACCA, wrily remarked 'English means money' (interview 06/09/17), and acquiring more economic capital through better-paid jobs and promotions was indirectly acknowledged by many participants as a key expected reward of learning the language. Economic

capital can be gained through access to positions in multinationals or abroad, by taking part in training events and developing one's skills and knowledge to be up-to-date with the latest trends, mediated by English as "the international language" and "the language of knowledge". Learning English was also considered a cornerstone of increasing your social and cultural capital. Using the language to broaden your professional and personal horizons beyond existing networks, especially through social media, means being able to build connections to bypass or create the connections needed to secure opportunities for oneself. Articulating dreams and concerns at both the national and individual level, it means broadcasting to the world who "Algerians" are and communicating beyond the linguistic borders linked to the colonial heritage. The formation of new social nexus is thereby also equated with being part of a wider global and international culture, interlocking national and individual concerns of representation of identity (and personality) to "the outside". On an individual level, exposure to English is understood as inherently positive because transformative. Being "the language of knowledge" in addition to "the international language" encourages self-development through the cultivation of skills and attitudes which become associated with English.

Nonetheless, these opportunities broadly remain the prerogative of the already privileged, and the focus on individual successes and supposed equal access masks how discourses about and practices of English are inserted within existing structures of inequality. From access to jobs to the legitimacy of one's practices, the "language of opportunities" in fact forms an integral part of elite closure mechanisms, reproducing rather than questioning social immobility. While English can confer additional prestige within one's immediate circle (as in the case of teenagers' enjoying the language's cool-ness), it does not fundamentally alter the playing field. Discourses around the transformative and inherently beneficial nature of English also (perhaps counter-intuitively) contribute to fatalist narratives of the impossibility of change. Language practices are characterised as a result of political decisions, and actual daily practices and choices discounted.

As with the discourses about the nation relocalised in English, the apparent paradoxes between discourses of transformation and immobility should not be taken to mean that participants somehow lie or are deceived by the promises of international organisations. In fact, I argue that positive discourses about English are found reproduced by all participants (whether they would be able to access the touted benefits or not) precisely because of their awareness that language change would not be sufficient to question socio-economic hierarchies without some form of political change as well. Talking about English becomes just as important if not more compared to what English actually affords, because wider discourses about social mobility, identities, belonging and self-development are relocalised within the language. Ethnographic fieldwork brings to the fore participants' layered awareness of both the opportunities tied to a language which currently remains a prerogative of the few, and the profound entanglements between these opportunities and existing socio-political and economic hierarchies.

Conclusion

Taking Algeria as a case study, my work aimed to provide a more complex and refined understanding of what the "spread of English" looks like and entails in countries where English was not the colonial language. This thesis therefore contributes to a better understanding of the dynamics of English in the world outside its traditional sphere of influence (Inner and Outer Circles, following Kachru's terminology). The approach and findings take the concept of "conflict" as a discourse rather than an unquestioned explanatory framework, thereby also providing insights into identity-building and social mobility processes in contemporary Algerian society. While the specific narratives and conclusions cannot be extended beyond the ethnographic case study, they offer new angles and data from which to consider similar processes in other African countries where English was not the colonial language.

This thesis posed the questions of what the prevalent discourses around English are, who learns and uses English and what for, as well as where English is visible in the semiotic landscape. Taken together, my research questions aimed to explore the interplay between "English" as a set of discourses and practices, and social worlds in contemporary Algeria. Combining ethnographic data and a decolonial approach, I focused not on the forms that "English" took or on pedagogical questions but rather on the ways in which language is shaped by and in turns shape social identity. Within a context of global celebration and concerns over the "spread of English", I examined which, how and under what circumstances local practices have been relocalised in English, and how this affects other social phenomena such as social hierarchies and the articulation of personal and group identities.

My research study was based on eleven months of fieldwork conducted across four Algerian cities: Algiers (my main site), El Oued (South-East), Ouargla (South) and Tlemcen (West). By combining participant observations and interviews with analysis of the semiotic landscape and analysis of discourses, I aimed to provide a more complex understanding not only of who English learners and users are, but also of the conditions within which this learning and using is taking place, the justifications and symbolic meanings attached to learning and using English, and what practices are being rewarded or discounted. While previous studies mostly relied on questionnaires of language attitudes or on general impressions of the "rise of English", ethnographic practice allowed me to examine both the discourses around English and the level at which they operate (nation, group, individual) as well as how practices are located within these discourses. Survey results and anecdotal evidence from previous research were extremely valuable in providing a sense of what the discourses around the symbolic functions

of English were, but could not account for the apparent plasticity of discourses, adapted to different situations or researchers, or the contradictions between what people said and what they did. Observations and interviews, the repeated presentation of my preliminary conclusions to participants for their feedback and the consideration of the impact of space on discourses were all crucial in developing a more complex picture of what claims of "English is replacing French" mean in practice.

While exact numbers and levels of English speakers are hard to assess, chapter 3 painted a picture of where and who English learners were, with chapters 4 and 5 exploring in more detail how discourses at the group and individual level structured understanding of practices, even if these practices did not always conform to proffered explanations. The use of English is highly associated with young people and especially university spaces, both in formal (classrooms) and more informal (student clubs, Facebook groups) embodiment. English is closely linked to "the young generation", a shifting notion seemingly always attached to those younger than oneself, no matter the age of the participant. Entwining practices of English with this particular age group was both enabled by and reinforced discourses of novelty and the importance of the internet and social media. While young people (especially students and recent graduates) make up a sizeable proportion of people who are using more English, this should not obscure differences within the age group based on other characteristics: social class, education, geography. In fact, cultural and economic capital play a more pronounced role in predicting participation in English-speaking spaces: privileged students and professionals were more likely to receive training, access clubs or go to English-speaking events within Algeria or abroad. The link between social class and English is also visible in the semiotic landscape, with most instances of English found in wealthy neighbourhoods and on central trendy shopping areas. Despite a prevalent discourse of Algiers being "French-speaking" and therefore that more English could be found in the Arabic-speaking Sahara (both labels being misleading in suggesting that these linguistic practices are mutually exclusive), in fact English was most visible in supposedly French-speaking spaces, and was used (and learnt) more by people who already spoke French confidently.

The question of what users of English do within a society where actual daily use is limited is intimately connected to discourses. A language perceived as "absent" can help construct personal and group identity, not mainly through communicative or purely decorative use but also through highly ritualised phrases, as it becomes 'a way of inscribing not only the speaker but also the audience as part of a group' (Ahlers, 2006, p. 68). In fact, whether or not my participants were learning English, the idea that the language was a tool of resistance against French and its colonial and neo-colonial interference remained a prevalent explanatory framework. French was equated to colonial destruction, existing elites and, by extension, closed political and economic systems as well as exclusionary language ideologies of purity and mastery. Constructions of English as "neutral" and "international" are appropriated across all groups within the Algerian context to signal a competition with French, hopes of political change (in various guises depending on the group) and the (re)creation of a newly (re)found authentic Algerian identity. With shifting discourses always attributed to others, ascertaining who is saying what does not follow neatly delineated identity-through-language categories, with French speakers just as likely to refer to English's supposed neutrality and competition with French

as people defining themselves as Arabic speakers. The question of how much of this discourse is really new would necessitate further research in order to construct a historicised understanding of how discourses of neutrality and authenticity have been relocalised through English.

In contemporary Algeria however, constructions of English as new, foreign and neutral also serve to invisibilise existing practices: if English is new and foreign, it cannot already be "Algerian". The presence of English in the semiotic landscape is erased or ignored, recognising only the practices of English users within already prestigious spaces: companies (especially multinationals), universities, foreign NGOs. Far from enabling more inclusive language ideologies or the recognition of daily translanguaging, "English" promotes the foregrounding of the white Western "expert" and racialised understandings of the "native speaker" at the expense of African users. Taken within the context of politicised culture, talking about English (and its supposed neutrality) contributes to the displacement of political debates to the cultural sphere, placing language difficulties at the feet of "the government".

Who speaks English is simultaneously no-one, everyone and always someone else. English becomes a convenient short-hand to denote the "Other" and to discuss wider social questions, including in discussions of authenticity. Because "English" is embedded within discourses of novelty and absence, and therefore supposedly "outside" existing identity frameworks, talking about who speaks and uses English also becomes a way of relocalising narratives of regional identities, privilege and exclusion. In turn "the South", "the capital" and "the West" are seen as places where there is "more English" by participants who are not there and serves to emphasise differences. Constructed as "foreign" and therefore not Algerian, the idea that it is always others who speak more English is constructed both as a complaint and grounds for suspicion, especially towards "the new generation", and including by people who could be considered part of the elites themselves.

Group-level discourses about identity also intersect with individual-level ones, found in one-to-one interviews. These replicate more closely global discourses about English as "international" and the "language of development", and obscure the ways in which existing hierarchies are reproduced rather than challenged. Learning and using English was closely connected discursively to hopes of spatial and social mobility, with linguistic competence equated to a form of symbolic capital. Although these frames were related to the discourses of novelty, "international language" and neutrality, they were much more present in one-to-one interviews and conversations than ideas of resistance to French. "English" was seen as offering opportunities to build one's network beyond established social connections and reinvent a group identity that was self-focused, proudly Algerian and connected to the world. The discourses and practices of "new identities" bridged the personal and the professional, physical and online, and often spanned in time between university and the world of work.

The same people patronised a limited number of spaces, thereby elevating both the prestige of these spaces (because few in number and accessible only through existing advantages in terms of cultural and economic capital) but also their own (by being seen as associating within these spaces and building up social capital). In effect, English inserts itself within existing structures of inequality:

it might confer additional prestige within the immediate circle of the user, but does not fundamentally alter the playing field.

While there is an undeniable underlying shift towards more awareness of English and more audible discourses about English, this is too often conflated with a wholesale change in terms of language replacement. The fact that young people now are seeing, hearing and occasionally using more English words is equated to the automatic and function-for-function replacement of French by English. In practice my research shows that higher awareness or use of English on its own is not sufficient to effect any social change, without other indicators of social, cultural and economic capital. What my study demonstrates so far is that while English is being integrated within some linguistic repertoires and some practices are being relocalised into English, this is not translating into erasing French. In fact, the participants who spoke English and/or were present in English-speaking spaces nearly always also spoke good-to-excellent French. This does not mean that people who speak only English and Arabic (and no French) do not exist, but rather that they are not found in the English-speaking spaces I studied (and which were linked to prestige), they were not being mentioned by recruiters, they were not seen in language schools. Without the symbolic capital afforded by membership of these spaces and the starting symbolic capital necessary to access them, these "invisible" (because invisibilised) users of English could not be rewarded for their enhanced "human capital" nor access the promised social mobility. Another important aspect to keep in mind in discussing "underprivileged populations" is that they are regularly the target of international funding aimed at improving stability and security through enhanced employability, often through the direct or indirect promotion of English as the medium of career development, soft skills and self-development more broadly. So far there is not enough data to evaluate whether these programmes are having any impact on young people's employment record or community involvement, once other social markers are taken into account. Whether "French" is being replaced by "English" is, to a certain extent, irrelevant. What seems more appropriate to ask is what this means, in discourse and in practice, for different social groups and for individuals.

Limitations and further research

The subtle and changing nature of discourses made clear to me the importance of being with and talking to participants several times in different contexts, but at the same time shorter periods of time were often much more productive: in two weeks in Tlemcen I had conducted the equivalent amount of observations and interviews I had managed to conduct in two months in Algiers. Accommodating this tension between access and depth was a key part of conducting the research and analysing findings, but means that more research would be needed in order to better understand the regional and social dynamics linked to English: how are discourses appropriated by people who are excluded from the French-speaking hierarchy and what practices arise? To what extent are discursive constructions of "the South" through language use reproduced and enacted by people who live and work in the Sahara? Further ethnographic work with under-researched populations such as people living in

rural areas would allow for another layer of complexity, investigating the relevance of existing class, geographical and linguistic categories. Combining new research with already-published but hard to access studies (such as the work of Algerian postgraduate students) would also offer the opportunity to understand dynamics of identity, authentication and othering through English. This will be the focus of my Leverhulme-funded postdoctoral research.

Although not specifically looking at translanguaging practices, this study greatly benefited from this approach and could in turn provide further insights into the workings of languaging outside its more traditionally-studied setting of superdiverse metropolises. More work needs to be done on understanding young people's integration of English within their linguistic repertoire, both online and offline, and how the discourses of "generations" influence individual practices and discourses. While my level of Algerian (specifically Algérois) Arabic has been improving throughout my thesis, it was not good enough to conduct an analysis of translanguaging practices online, which would be particularly relevant in understanding better the mechanisms through which translanguaging in most societies is both completely normal (in terms of practices) but not the norm (in terms of discourses), and the place of English within these dynamics.

One important and so far untouched question arising from studying English and social worlds in Algeria is the question of the impact of the diaspora on language dynamics. While questions of diaspora return and language replacement after periods of civil strife have been common in discussing Rwanda, it has never been investigated in the case of Algeria. The anecdotal evidence presented in this thesis, where returnees seek to transform their English skills into economic and cultural capital, would need to be supplemented by a more in-depth studies of both long-term returns and holiday-makers: both in the way "English-speaking diaspora Algerians" embody their Algerian-ness on holiday (as in Wagner, 2017), but also on the discourses and practices of their families and relations in Algeria.

Another aspect which would benefit from closer attention would be a historicised understanding of the place of English in Algeria (and North Africa more broadly), as discourses of novelty, change and language replacement appear since the 1970s. This would complement emerging literatures into the social history of Algeria post 1962.

Contribution

My work contributes to the scholarship on the sociolinguistics of English in the world by examining how global discourses around the "spread of English" are read and reconstructed in contexts where it was not the colonial language. Going beyond accounts of English as inherently transformative or as purely imperialistic, it extends research focusing on unequal Englishes by investigating the mechanisms through which social inequalities are challenged and reproduced through language. My research supports and refines recent research in South East Asia (Tupas, 2015) which states that "English" has a differentiated impact dependent on other socio-economic and cultural characteristics. It adds to our

understanding of language as practice rather than "spread" (Pennycook, 2010), through close examination of what the "local" means, and how talking about and using language is embedded within (and contributes to transform) existing forms of participation in society.

This study also questions the prevalent "conflict" explanatory framework applied unreflectively to cultural issues in Algeria (and in the Maghreb more generally), demonstrating instead how discourses of conflict and strict boundaries are simultaneously paramount in shaping participants' understandings and negated or flouted through practices. Ethnographic methods allow for further insights into how the politics of language are read and embodied beyond policies, curricula and news headlines, and the questions arising from this research are relevant to scholars working on national and group identities in Africa and the Middle East.

By bringing together concepts and questions developed separately, as well as considering what has been written about French in addition to what has been written about English, this research inserts itself within both the French-speaking and English-speaking critical sociolinguistics tradition. It bridges the scholarship on the sociolinguistics of French and English in the world by presenting the dynamics of language change in a country which, albeit not a formal member of the institutional Francophonie, has been described as having the largest number of French speakers outside of France. It challenges prevailing accounts of language situations which focus only on questions of language replacement (or the "who wins" debate) rather than considering how language practices are read, inscribed and transformed within social worlds.

With participants foregrounded as co-researchers, the apparent contradictions within and between attitudes and practices around English and its indexing of mobility, modernity and de-colonisation are presented in all their complexities. The findings presented here are of interest to cultural organisations working in non-Anglophone settings as well as policy-makers debating the place of language within wider foreign cooperation programming: the use or promotion of English is not straightforward and local discourses on English should be read and understood within local frames of references, and close attention should be paid to mechanisms of elite closure. The study will benefit any organisation looking to discuss the "spread of English" or "English as an international language" by providing an example of sets of mechanisms, discourses and practices around the increased use of English in a society.

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Appendix A: Language policies in independent Algeria

NB: not all policies were fully implemented and this timeline is not exhaustive.

1962 School system mostly inherited from colonial times: French as medium of instruction, Arabic as "foreign language"

1964 Arabic introduced as a working language in parliament + First year of primary school to be taught in Arabic

1966 History to be taught in Arabic

1967 First and second years of primary school to be taught in Arabic

1968 All civil servants asked to learn Arabic within three years

1971 Declared "Year of Arabisation": third and fourth years of primary school to also be taught in Arabic + ⅓ of students in the first year of secondary school to follow a fully Arabised curriculum + ⅓ of students in the first year of sixth form to follow a fully Arabised curriculum

1972 Law stipulating that teaching will be delivered in Arabic at all levels and for all subjects (only applied in 1980)

1976 Set of school reforms creating "l'Ecole Polytechnique Fondamentale"

1979 Student strikes starting in the department of Law at Algiers University, bemoaning the lack of jobs available for students from Arabised disciplines and demanding full Arabisation of higher education

1980 "Berber spring" in Kabylia asking for linguistic and cultural recognition

1980 Arabisation of all social sciences and humanities and of the judiciary + French taught from the fourth year of primary school, English, Spanish or German from the first year of secondary school (seventh year of schooling)

1986 End of "classes transitoires" where scientific subjects were still being taught in French

1991 Arabic as sole language of all administrative and education institutions and organisations, in all their commercial, financial, technical and artistic dealings. Planned deadlines of 1992 for complete Arabisation of the civil service and 1997 for complete Arabisation of all university courses

1994 Parents are given the choice between French and English as first foreign language (abandoned

two years later)

1996 New National Charter & Constitution

1998 Law prohibiting the use of any other language but Arabic in the public space

1999 Election of Bouteflika, who subsequently gives speeches in both Arabic and French

2002 Tamazight as national language

2003 Set of school reforms: new curricula, quality assurance mechanisms

2004 French taught from the second year of primary school as a "first foreign language" + Tamazight classes available in some secondary schools + English (or Spanish or German) as a "second foreign language" taught from the seventh year of schooling (first year of secondary school)

2016 Constitutional reforms, including recognition of Tamazight as a national and official language

Appendix B: Documents

The following sample of representative texts was used to yield a set of initial categories following manual line-by-line coding (see subsection 2.3.5).

Policy

Embassy of the UK in Algeria & Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Algeria. (2014). *Work programme.* Unpublished internal document, Embassy of the UK in Algeria.
Gouvernement de la République Algérienne. (2013). *Programme de travail en matière éducative entre le Gouvernement de la République Algérienne Démocratique et Populaire, et le Gouvernement de sa Majesté la Reine du Royaume Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord.* Unpublished internal document, Embassy of the UK in Algeria.
Ministère de l'Education Nationale. (2008). *Bulletin Officiel - Loi d'orientation sur l'éducation nationale.*
Ministère de l'Education Nationale. (2015). *Activités: Programmes d'enseignement.* Retrieved from Ministère de l'Education Nationale website: www.education.gov.dz/fr/activity/programmes-denseignement/.
Toualbi, N., & Tawil, S. (2005). *La refonte de la pédagogie en Algérie: défis et enjeux d'une société en mutation.* Rabat: Bureau de l'UNESCO pour le Maghreb.

Reports from foreign consultancies and organisations

British Council. (2014). *English in Algeria: Opening doors to large-scale opportunities.* Unpublished internal document, British Council.
EF Education First. (2015). *EF English Proficiency Index Fifth Edition.* Retrieved from EF Education First website: www.ef.com
Euromonitor International. (2012). *The Benefits of the English Language for Individuals and Societies: Quantitative Indicators from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen.* Euromonitor International.

Academic production

Atmane, Y. A. (2013). Analyse des catégorisations des langues auprès d'apprenants universitaires de Sidi-Bel-Abbès. *Synergies Algérie*, 20, 51–66.

Benrabah, M. (2009). Open and closed languages in the postcolonial era. *International Journal of Francophone Studies*, 12(2–3), 253–269.

Lanseur, S. (2010). L'enrichissement lexical à l'épreuve des contacts de langues dans le discours de la téléphonie mobile : le cas des opérateurs Mobilis et Nedjma. *Synergies Algérie*, 9, 211–225.

Lefèvre, R. (2015). The coming of North Africa's 'language wars'. *The Journal of North African Studies*, 20(4), 499–502.

Ounis, F. (2012). Rivalité entre le français et l'anglais : mythe ou réalité ? *Synergies Algérie*, 17, 87–92.

Learners

Essays from the "How has English changed my life" competition run through Echorouk newspaper (2013) [10 shortlisted essays]

Essays from 5th year English student at the ENS on the topic of "My English journey" as part of their coursework (2015) [4 sample essays]

Appendix C: Interviews cited

Abdennour, Tlemcen, 5 December 2017

Amina, Algiers, 12 February 2017

Aymen, Algiers, 4 November 2015

Ayoub, Tlemcen, 4 December 2017

Bachra & Souad, Ouargla, 15 March 2017

Chakiba, Tlemcen, 5 December 2017

Djallil, Algiers, 5 September 2017

Fahima, Ouargla, 14 March 2017

Feng & Lang-hao, Tlemcen, 13 December 2017

Feryel, Ouargla, 15 March 2017

Gaël, Algiers, 4 November 2015

Hannah, Algiers, 6 September 2017

Houda, Algiers, 4 November 2015

Hicheme, Algiers, 13 December 2016

Ilyès, Tlemcen, 6 December 2017

Karen, Algiers, 3 November 2015 and 2 March 2017

Lounès, Ouargla, 14 March 2017

Lylia, Algiers, 12 October 2017

Meriem, Algiers, 23 February 2017

Mouna, Algiers, 7 February 2017

Mounir, Algiers, 6 June 2017

Nacer, Algiers, 18 February 2017

Naïma, Tlemcen, 11 December 2017

Nour, Algiers, 3 November 2015

Ouarda & Abderrahmane, Algiers, 7 March 2017

Saliha, Algiers, 7 June 2017

Salma, El Oued, 17 September 2017

Tahar, Tlemcen, 13 December 2017

Tarik, Algiers, 25 May 2017 and 8 July 2017

Tayeb, Algiers, 10 September 2017

Wassim, Algiers, 4 June 2017

Zaki, Algiers, 5 October 2017

Group interviews with students, Algiers, 1 March 2017 and 7 March 2017

Group interviews with students, Ouargla, 13-14 March 2017

Group interview with English department staff, El Oued, 19 September 2017

Group interviews with English department staff, Tlemcen, 05-06 December 2017

Appendix D: Research Ethics Review

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
University of Portsmouth
Ethics-fhss@port.ac.uk

25th October 2016

Dear Camille Jacob

Study Title:	An ethnographic study of the place of English in Algeria,
Ethics Committee reference:	**16/17:04**

Thank you for submitting your documents for ethical review. The Ethics Committee was content to grant a favourable ethical opinion of the above research on the basis described in the application form, protocol and supporting documentation, revised in the light of any conditions set, subject to the general conditions set out in the attached document.

There is no need to submit any further evidence to the Ethics Committee; the favourable opinion has been granted with the assumption of compliance

The favourable opinion of the EC does not grant permission or approval to undertake the research. Management permission or approval must be obtained from any host organisation, including University of Portsmouth, prior to the start of the study.

FORM UPR16

Research Ethics Review Checklist

Please include this completed form as an appendix to your thesis (see the Research Degrees Operational Handbook for more information

UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH

Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) Information				**Student ID:**	793467
PGRS Name:	Camille Jacob				
Department:	SASHPL	**First Supervisor:**	Natalya Vince		
Start Date: (or progression date for Prof Doc students)	**01/10/2015**				
Study Mode and Route:	Part-time ☐ Full-time ☒	MPhil ☐ PhD ☒	MD ☐ Professional Doctorate ☐		

Title of Thesis:	English and social worlds in contemporary Algeria
Thesis Word Count: (excluding ancillary data)	79,982

If you are unsure about any of the following, please contact the local representative on your Faculty Ethics Committee for advice. Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the University's Ethics Policy and any relevant University, academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study

Although the Ethics Committee may have given your study a favourable opinion, the final responsibility for the ethical conduct of this work lies with the researcher(s).

UKRIO Finished Research Checklist:
(If you would like to know more about the checklist, please see your Faculty or Departmental Ethics Committee rep or see the online version of the full checklist at: http://www.ukrio.org/what-we-do/code-of-practice-for-research/)

a) Have all of your research and findings been reported accurately, honestly and within a reasonable time frame?	YES ☒ NO ☐
b) Have all contributions to knowledge been acknowledged?	YES ☒ NO ☐
c) Have you complied with all agreements relating to intellectual property, publication and authorship?	YES ☒ NO ☐
d) Has your research data been retained in a secure and accessible form and will it remain so for the required duration?	YES ☒ NO ☐
e) Does your research comply with all legal, ethical, and contractual requirements?	YES ☒ NO ☐

Candidate Statement:

I have considered the ethical dimensions of the above named research project, and have successfully obtained the necessary ethical approval(s)

Ethical review number(s) from Faculty Ethics Committee (or from NRES/ SCREC):	16/17:04

If you have *not* submitted your work for ethical review, and/or you have answered 'No' to one or more of questions a) to e), please explain below why this is so:

Signed *(PGRS)*:		**Date:** 03/06/2019